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NEW YORK AS THE AMERICAN
METROPOLIS.

IN a recent number of the "International Quarterly Magazine," Mr. Will H. Low has discussed at length the claims of New York to be considered the art metropolis of the United States, and he reaches the conclusion that in spite of many circumstances which fail to corroborate the claim, the city can present a valid title to the distinction. But a city cannot be the metropolis of art, unless it is also a metropolis of industry, commerce and of social and intellectual activity, and in this connection the whole question of its metropolitan quality is worth raising. The majority of New Yorkers will believe the question already settled. During the past fifty years they have made incessant and noisy claims that their city was the metropolis of the United States, but they have rarely understood that the quality of being metropolitan is not merely a matter of population. To be metropolitan a city must possess other claims to superiority. Thirty or forty years ago, New York headed the population lists as it does now; yet it was on close scrutiny none the less distinctly provincial; and it was provincial because its place in American industrial and social economy was not distinguished in kind from that of any other city. As the largest city in the country it was, indeed, the best existing mirror of a number of the most typical American traits and tendencies. One could read in that mirror better than in any other single place many significant facts; the great diversity of blood that was entering into the composition of the people; the predominance of special interests in the organization and conduct of American affairs; the prodigious mass of well-directed but uninformed energy, which was finding an outlet in this country, chiefly in business pursuits; and finally the high vitality of American life, its emotional consistency, coupled with its inferior structural organization. What

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is more New York, both by its geographical and commercial position was fortunately prevented from becoming like Boston, merely the metropolis of a locality, a provincial capital; it was broadly seated on the main-traveled roads, and must be national or nothing. All these characteristics made New York the possible, but not the actual, American metropolis. In order to be actually metropolitan, it must not only reflect large national tendencies, but it must sum them up and transform them. It must not only mirror typical American ways of thought and action, but it must anticipate, define and realize national ideals. A genuine metropolis must be, that is, both a concentrated and selected expression of the national life.

According to present indications, New York is approaching this conception of metropolitan excellence; it is unquestionably becoming the most highly organized and the most distinguished collective expression of American social life. As will be shown later, it is hampered in the attainment of this manifest destiny both by its provincial past and by many antecedent American tendencies and ideals. Moreover, under our conditions, it can never become as consummately metropolitan as some of the European capitals; as Paris is, for instance, or as Berlin is likely to be. The forces originating in our local centres have too honorable and tenacious a life to permit the growth of an American Paris, while the mere fact that New York is not the political capital of the country cuts it off from one of the most effective sources of concentration and distinction. But it is undoubtedly on the road to becoming the most national and the least suburban of American cities, the city to which men will be attracted in proportion as their enterprises, intellectual or practical, are far-reaching and important; and its power to attract such men, and, if not to hold them, at least to keep them subject to its influence, will be the best test of its success. In the making of a metropolis, every part of the country must contribute a portion of its energy and talent; and as the whole country is represented in the making, so it can take credit for the result.

As long as the prevailing economic movement was that of agricultural expansion, the United States was not in a position to have or to need a metropolis. The tide of national energy was irresistibly spreading over the West, and was occupied in fitting it for human habitation, in enlarging the basis of the economic organism to continental dimensions. The most active and enterprising men were being drawn to the pioneer states; and their activity and enterprise were spent in the rough, hard, many-sided work of settling, clearing and building up a new country. Men were formed in very much the same mould. The personal and

intellectual qualities which this work demanded were independence, tough persistence of purpose, and mental elasticity and adaptability. It was a case of extraordinary national vitality achieving a necessary preliminary task in obedience to compelling motives that acted upon and influenced many individuals in a very similar way. But obviously this preliminary stage is now passed. There are still new lands to conquer in the arid parts of the West; but they must be conquered by irrigation—that is, by organized, capitalized and not merely individual effort. The period of colonization, when the process of agricultural expansion was the dominant process, and gave its character to the whole economic body, has been succeeded by a period of industrial concentration, which in its turn is putting its stamp upon American men and methods. Courage, tenacity, independence and adaptability are as necessary as ever; but they are receiving a different expression, and to them are being added a much larger infusion of patience, knowledge and authoritative direction. The great characteristic of the new movement is centralization—the organization of the productive resources of the country at convenient central points, and on a national scale; and the men who are needed, are the organizers and the experts—the men who can give machinery of all kinds its maximum efficiency.

It is this organization of American industrial and commercial interests on a national scale which is making New York at least the financial and industrial metropolis of the United States. The process has gone far enough to create a national financial and industrial center, which is in a different class from any subordinate center, such as Boston or Chicago, and which exercises, directly or indirectly, a tolerably and increasingly effective control over all the largest business enterprises. New York has come to occupy this authoritative position, because, through its geographical situation, it has been the natural outlet for the products of the West and the most convenient port of entry for European labor and capital. During colonial times, when the inhabitants of the country were confined to the Atlantic seaboard, New York was inferior to Boston and Philadelphia in population, wealth and general importance. Its peculiar prosperity and its peculiar position in American commercial economy have been due to the settlement of the States on the Great Lakes, and the construction of the Erie Canal, which carried western products to the seaboard. Hence it was that as soon as American commerce began to be organized on a national basis, New York became the center of the organization, and every subsequent enlargement of the scope and enhancement of the efficiency of this organization has made its commanding position more certain and complete. Its supremacy was first ex-

exercised in commercial and financial matters; but in the course of time the power of the purse brought with it in a certain sense industrial supremacy. As a railroad or manufacturing corporation became larger, as its business was spread over more and more territory and needed more and more capital, it came frequently, if not inevitably, to make its headquarters in New York. The movement in this direction is so obvious, and during the past few years has obtained the testimony of so many fresh examples that it is unnecessary to dwell upon it at any length. Suffice it to say that the "skyscrapers" of New York are as much filled with the offices of corporations, which conduct a business in other parts of the country, as Fifth Avenue is filled with the residences of capitalists who made their money in the West. New York is steadily attracting a large proportion of the best business ability of the country, not only as a matter of business convenience, but quite as much because of the exceptional opportunity it offers to its favored inhabitants of making and spending money.

The social results of this industrial re-organization are radically different from the social results of the earlier agricultural expansion. The movement of population, instead of being almost exclusively from the more to the less densely populated regions, is now from country to the city, and in some measure from smaller cities to the larger. While it is not at all true to say that the West is returning any considerable fraction of the population which it formerly derived from the East, it is true that certain western people are for certain purposes doubling on their tracks. Nothing is more common, for instance, than for well-to-do western families to build summer homes in northern New England; and this is only one illustration among many of the more intimate social as well as industrial relations among different parts of the country. These relations are more intimate because they are more reciprocal. Time was when the West was continually borrowing people and money from the East, but now the children of the emigrant from New England are spending more and more of his money in the part of the country from which he came. The social current which formerly set all in one direction is broken up into a thousand little currents, which are swirling around somewhat confusedly as yet, but which eventually will find their bed and their level. New York is the chief gainer from this social re-distribution. The western families, who go abroad during the summer or pass it in New England pay tribute to New York as they come and go. Western millionaires settle in New York, not only for business reasons, but because their wives and daughters want the social advantages of living in that city; and even when it is not a matter of settling down permanently, rich people from all over the country like to buy their

clothes and take their pleasures in the city, which in a sense is coming to be the American social metropolis.

In a sense New York is the social metropolis, but in what sense? If in no other sense than as the department store and the playground of people who have more money than they need, then the fact need interest nobody except the keepers of shops and hotels. The metropolis of a great country should, as I have already pointed out, do something to anticipate, to clarify and to realize the best national ideals in politics, society, literature and art. Is New York besides being the metropolis of the rich business man and his wife, is it also the metropolis in any better and deeper sense?

To a certain and to an increasing extent, yes; but the leadership of New York in social and intellectual matters is rather a result which is promised than one which is achieved. The people of the United States are scarcely prepared for such leadership. They are becoming thoroughly nationalized politically and industrially, but in social and intellectual matters the merely individual and local spirit remains dominant. American industry is well-organized, well-directed and efficient; American national policy is founded on a better understanding than ever before of the ends that should be pursued, and the means which those ends require; but the American intellectual achievement is still experimental and uninformed. It has not yet been infected by the processes of definition and concentration, which have taken possession of such primary activities as business and politics.

The infusion of a national organic spirit into the culture of a people, is, of course, a very different thing from the organization of its industries on a national basis. Consolidation in social and intellectual matters does not mean management from a central office by an artistic "boss" or a "captain of culture;" it means the existence of a communicating current of formative ideas and purposes which makes the different part of the social body articulate, and which stamps the mass of its works with a kindred spirit and direction. The center from which this communicating current of ideas radiates is the social and intellectual metropolis of a country, and New York has not yet become such a center, partly because American social life is largely still in an invertebrate and amorphous condition. It is from the social point of view a low organism, full of vitality, but with the vitality resident in its members rather than in the central parts. The evidence of this vitality is a quickness of circulation, which infects every branch of social achievement. Its ethnological aspect is the ready assimilation of hordes of alien immigrants; its economic aspect is the ease with which it throws off superannuated machinery, the American recognition of the business value of the "scrap heap;" its intellectual as-

pect is the prevalence of mental alertness and vivacity; its moral aspect is the equally prevailing kindness of disposition, the faith of the average American both that things will come out all right and that men can be trusted. But this particular kind of social vitality, while it gives the people, considering their diversity of blood and the vast extent of their country, great unity of feeling, leaves this unity of feeling blind and uninformed. It cleaves thoughtlessly to the stock of political and social ideas with which the nation started on its career; and it refuses to examine those ideas critically or to accept the results of an examination by better informed people. In fact these ideas are themselves distinctly inimical to any suggestions of authority in matters of opinion. This rejection of authority in matters of opinion did not make much difference during our earlier period of economic immaturity, but the industrial reorganization has made the actual practice of the American people very much more dependent upon the practice of authority in business and politics; and for the sake of national consistency, it is desirable that our ideas should in this as in other respects square with our behavior.

If, however, it is true that the United States are not well prepared for an intellectual and social leader, it is equally true that New York City has not yet qualified to assume that position. It is a city which offers unique opportunities for good Americans to make and spend money, but it has not yet become a city in which the finer and more constructive social and æsthetic ideals, gradually becoming influential in American life, have received any adequate expression. It still represents rather the formlessness and incoherence of our American past than the better defined and more fully rounded and proportioned creation of the future. Private, special and business interests have been dominant in New York ever since the Revolution, and have left an indelible mark upon the public life and appearance of the city. There has never been any attempt commensurate with its resources to plan it adequately and conveniently, or to adorn it appropriately. On the contrary, the streets have been made a gift to real estate speculators and builders to deform as suited their interests; and they have done and are still doing their worst. The standards of architectural decorum in no American city are very high, but if New York were in any very genuine sense a social metropolis, its standards would be higher than those of Boston and Chicago. In point of fact they are, if anything, lower. Whereas in those cities, a restriction, although a small one, is or has been placed upon the height of fire-proof buildings, in New York such structures are restricted only by the amount of elevator service, which it pays to provide. Is any effective protest conceivable in New York, such as the protest

which public opinion in Boston raised against the erection of a preposterously high apartment-house, in immediate architectural relation to Trinity Church? A construction company might any day file plans for a twenty-five story building across the street from the new Public Library, and not only would there be no chance of legal prevention, but probably little or no protest from public opinion.

The vigorous and effectual protest which Boston made against the building of the Westminster Chambers was no doubt due to the pride which Bostonians take in Copley Square, and it is significant of the poverty of public life in New York that there is no square in that city which arouses a similar feeling of satisfaction. There is, indeed, one public building which is a subject of general interest and pride, viz., the City Hall; but this public interest has never availed to preserve its surroundings from maltreatment and desecration. It has not prevented the city corporation from building in its immediate vicinity a Court House whose much more massive bulk dwarf the City Hall. Neither did it prevent one of the worst sins against public decorum and æsthetic decency which any city of metropolitan pretensions ever committed—that is, the grant of the triangle at the lower end of the City Hall Park to the national government as a site for a central post office. By that act and by the building of the Court House, the municipal government degraded one of the most spacious and delightful squares with which any City Hall in America was surrounded into an insignificant little park, over-run with buildings, with no approaches, no vistas, very little atmosphere, and no disposition of any kind to give space, distinction and dignity. It is bad enough for a city never to bestow upon the centre of its corporate life appropriate surroundings, but what must we say of a city whose oldest and most beautiful public building possessed every advantage of location and environment, and which then wantonly threw these advantages away? This incident is unfortunately typical of the time-honored attitude of New York toward all the proprieties of its public appearance. The city has no public squares which, either because of the sacredness of their associations or the excellence of their encircling buildings, have aroused in the minds of its inhabitants any feelings of pride and affection.

If New York hitherto has set a bad example to the rest of the country in matters of municipal arrangement, it is because the social situation in that city is no improvement over the social situation elsewhere in the country. The homogeneity so characteristic of American democracy at its best tends to disappear in the complicated hurly-burly of the life of a great city, and the underlying separation of interest and point of view in its make-up comes plain-

ly to the surface. In the case of New York, not only does the population contain an unusual proportion of raw and unapproachable foreigners, but the composition, even of the upper levels of society, is that of a set of cliques. As Mr. Robert Grant's "Flossie" has put it, in his novel of "Unleavened Bread," a novel which throws much more light upon current social tendencies than any American story recently published: "People here (in New York) are either in society or out of it, and society itself is divided into sets, the smart rapid set, the set that has not much money, but has Knickerbocker, or other highly respectable ancestors, the new millionaire set, the literary set, the intellectual philanthropic set, and so on."

Be it added, the social composition of New York is even more deeply divided into "sets" than even the large social experience of "Flossie" was able to comprehend. There is in addition to the others a political "set," known as Tammany Hall, which draws a broad black line of demarkation through the middle of New York society. Tammany is strong—in defeat as well as in victory—because its organization and policy has a social foundation. It is both a collection of popular clubs and a mutual benefit society; and its members are united consequently as much by bonds of common feeling as by common interests. Tammany calls itself the People's party, and there is this much justice in the claim: that within the limits of its own supporters there is an abundance of good fellowship and mutual understanding, while the leaders do not claim or exercise any social superiority. But organized as it is, in order to secure the opportunities and emoluments of office for the personal and political profit of good Tammany men, the community of feeling on which it is based necessarily becomes as narrow as its political purposes are factional and selfish. In this way democratic good fellowship develops into mere class prejudice, and becomes equivalent to a tenacious and systematic attempt to array the less educated and poorer inhabitants of York against the more educated and the better-to-do. It is a class organization of the comparatively poor and ignorant, which seeks to govern the city of New York, chiefly for its own benefit; and like all powerful class organizations, it cannot be effectually fought, it cannot be permanently defeated, except by the assertion and the realization on the part of its opponents of a really inclusive and democratic social ideal. Mere denunciation of Tammany Hall will not suffice; neither will the most thorough and disinterested discussion of the positive details of administrative policy, such as Mr. Edward Shepard has advocated. Municipal government can never be conducted exclusively on a business basis. It is essentially a politics, but it is local and not national politics, and it is politics de-

pendent for its health upon a serious belief in the democratic social ideal.

While Tammany is well organized and excellently led, those elements in New York society which are opposed to it have no similar cohesion, no natural and accepted leaders. They are divided into the kind of cliques mentioned above. One of the most conspicuous, but least interesting of these cliques is the good society of the city—the "Smart set." Individual members of this "good society," both men and women, are playing an honorable and useful part in the contemporary movements making for the amelioration of social and political conditions in the city; but as a whole it is as much out of touch with the formative and progressive agencies in our social life as are the remnants of the French nobility in Paris. While almost as exclusive as the "society" of any aristocratic country, it is unlike these societies, solely occupied with having a good time, by means of the lavish expenditure of money. It is not interested in politics as the good "society" of London is; it is not interested in literature as the "society" of Boston used to be; it does not even try to patronize artists and literary men. It is merely a pleasure-loving coterie which no ideas beyond a house-party or a cotillion. And this attitude on the part of the families of rich men is only a reflection of the attitude of the heads of such families toward their public duties. In their own way, American millionaires show an abundance of public spirit; but their own way, that of distributing money liberally for philanthropic purposes, is, after all, a very easy way. These millionaires, the natural leaders of the American people, are rarely, if ever, wholesome influences in political and social affairs. They remain simply rich men, occupied mainly with making money and incidentally with spending it. They associate chiefly with other men of similar opulence, and when they do participate in politics, it is generally in alliance with the worst elements of the machine. The opponents of Tammany, the men who are attempting to ameliorate political and social conditions in New York, do not derive much assistance from the rich men as a class.

It will be remembered that "Flossie" distinguished among other cliques a literary and artistic "set." There is such a set, and in its way it is as much of a clique as the "society" it scorns. This divorce between the social and literary or artistic sets seems always to have existed in New York. The Knickerbocker families have no Copley portraits to hang upon their walls. In Boston, literature was always at home on Beacon street; in New York it has frequently tended to be somewhat Bohemian and vagabond. When Mr. William Dean Howells made, just previous to the war, the pilgrimage to the East, which he has so pleasantly described in his

"Literary Friends and Acquaintances," the literary celebrities of Boston received him in houses that bespoke refinement and social distinction, and gave him a dinner at the Parker House, served in the most approved European manner. But on coming to New York, he found the headquarters of the literary "set" in a beer keller on Broadway, which Whitman himself was given to frequenting, and these gentry were as fiercely and intentionally unconventional in their ideas as they were in their mode of life. It was doubtless this environment which Mr. James Parton had in mind, when he said that students should live in New England, where there are better libraries, but that loafers and men of genius should live in New York. From Whitman down there has certainly been a close alliance in New York between literature and loafing; or, if you prefer, between writing or painting for a living and social irresponsibility. The man of letters has been much more frequently connected with journalism, and much less frequently connected with the colleges than in Boston. Not indeed that many New York literary men, such as Washington Irving, William Cullen Bryant, and George William Curtis, have not preserved as punctiliously as you please the intellectual and social proprieties, but their conformity was in every case an individual affair. Literature or art has had no social standing.

The better New York writers and artists of the present day do not foregather in Broadway beer kellers, but their social standing has improved only in so far as they have improved it for themselves. They are still Bohemian, but Bohemian with good taste. They are non-conformists as much by principle as by instinct—as much because they want the freedom of comparative social irresponsibility, as because they dislike the peculiar kind of good "society" which New York offers. And they are right. It is well for artists of all kinds to keep to themselves and not to become too much entangled in the usages and conventions of any social body with interests different from their own. Their work has an ideal and a discipline necessarily different from the ideal and discipline natural to ordinary social action and life; and the purity of that ideal and the severity of that discipline can be maintained only by a certain amount of social exclusiveness and irresponsibility. But while the artists and men of letters are on the right track in keeping to themselves, yet the situation is unwholesome in several important respects. While it is no part of their business to do honor to "society," it is well for society to do honor to them—to grant them the **tribute** of recognition which eminent French men of letters and artists receive from their fellow countrymen. The natural heroes of the American are **not** artists or men of letters; they are politicians and millionaires. The appreciation which the artist, the writer

or the thinker receives is chiefly from his own set; and this fact narrows the social basis of disinterested intellectual work. The effect is worse for society than it is for the artist or the thinker; but it is bad for the artist and writer in that it throws them back too much on merely technical or literary or academic motives and disqualifies them for exercising a sufficiently positive and formative influence. The remedy will not or should not come too much from the direct mixture of artists and men of letters in society; but rather from the increasing authority of a class of men whose peculiar office it is to mediate between the two. Yet these men, who for lack of a better description may be called critics, can never obtain the authority they ought to exercise, until the popular ideals and traditions have been, in many respects, radically changed.

Insignificant, however, as is the standing of artists and men of letters in vast and quick procession of American life, New York is undoubtedly becoming the centre of an ever-increasing quantity of intellectual work. That city is proving to be quite as attractive to writers and painters as to millionaires and their families. The authors of American books, except those who are fastened to some particular locality by academic work, are coming to pass more and more of their time in New York; for even when they actually live somewhere else, which is frequent enough, the necessities of their trade take them continually to that city. And if the foregoing is true of the men of letters, it is even more true of the artists. The painter or sculptor is, as a rule, freer to live in the place that pleases him and benefits his work than is the writer, for he has usually been trained by some years of study abroad, and so has become emancipated, both inside and out, from local ties. So that the more eminent American artists, so far as they live in the cities at all, tend strongly to live in or near New York. Boston has almost ceased to be, not only a literary but an art centre. Chicago has no manifest destiny to become either. The good exhibitions in other cities are supplied by pictures of New York painters; and while there are the local art schools all over busily training young painters and sculptors, there seems to be some necessary connection, for these young people, between knowing their business and leaving their homes.

In the case of the men of letters, this drift is only partly due to the fact that the most important publishing houses are, with a few notable exceptions, situated in New York, and the most important magazines are edited from the same place. Such advantages are undoubtedly extremely influential in attracting the young writers, who are foot-free, and are seeking the largest and the quickest market for their literary wares. But men of letters have other and better reasons for fastening to New York. They can find in that city more than any other place in the country salutary and whole-

some intellectual companionship. They can find men who are working in their special lines, and who can give them the atmosphere of technical interest and criticism so helpful to every kind of artist. They can also find many other men of intelligence, who, whatever their peculiar work, can give them the stimulus of fresh ideas and new points of view. There is an intellectual society in New York, which, in spite of its deficiencies, is on the whole less of a coterie than any similar group elsewhere in the country; and an important constituent of this society is the painters and sculptors. The artists proper are drawn to New York not because it is a very beautiful city, not because New Yorkers are peculiarly appreciative of American art, but almost entirely because the association with his fellow-craftsmen, which is helpful to men of letters, is essential to artists. As a rule the latter feel themselves peculiarly isolated in American social life. Their work is neglected; their purposes are misunderstood; their achievements are undervalued; and all this happens in New York as it does elsewhere. But in New York they at least form a set of their own. They can associate with people to whom their purposes and their language are comprehensible; they get the benefit of that informal and largely technical comment, which is the only kind of criticism which does them much good; and they can keep in touch with the best work of their fellow artists. Hence it is that New York, which more than any great city in the world is lacking in any well-ordered comeliness, in any sense of proportion in its parts and activities, is becoming the peculiar home of American intellectual and artistic achievement, and the city, moreover, in which such achievement, although not very influential, is most sane and wholesome.

Whatever the deficiencies, however, of the political, social and intellectual life of New York, when examined from any high standard of efficiency and completeness, it can truthfully be said that the current movement is all in the direction of repairing these deficiencies. The city is certainly trying more and more to deserve and to obtain the leadership of the country in political, social and intellectual, as well as in financial and industrial affairs. A certain largeness and even definiteness of spirit is becoming discernible in the attitude which its citizens are taking towards the problems of its own betterment; and I think it can be shown that the recent municipal consolidation of the old New York with Brooklyn, Queens and Richmond, has had something to do with this spirit of amelioration. Public pride has been touched by the size of the city, the enormous business achievements of its citizens, and its importance in the commercial economy of the United States, and the quickening of the public conscience has naturally followed this awakening of municipal vanity. Neither is it fanciful to trace some connection between

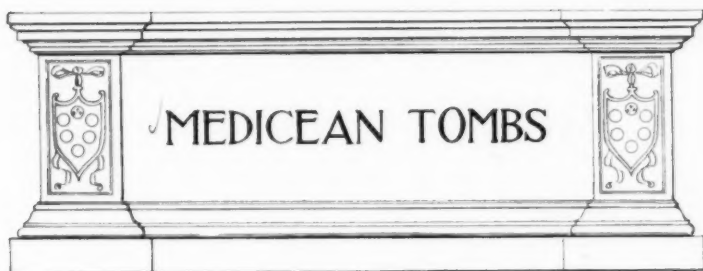
the aroused public spirit of the citizens of New York and the outburst of national feeling, which accompanied and followed the Spanish war. For, as I have already said, New York is national or nothing, and whatever intensifies and consolidates national life also quickens and consolidates the growth of public spirit in New York. It is not an accident that Theodore Roosevelt, who represents, both in what he stands for and what he is, the best form of the national idea, it is not an accident that he is a New Yorker, for it is difficult to see how just such a combination of disposition, experience, training and ideas could have come to a head in any other city.

The evidences of a quickened and consolidated public and social life in New York are numerous and imposing. I have explained, perhaps too much at length, the disadvantages to which the composition of New York society subjects men of letters and artists, but the fact remains that the intellectual atmosphere of New York has a certain exceptional quality. This quality is expressed by Prof Barret Wendell in his "Literary History of America," as follows: "Beneath its bewildering material variety, there is a greater variety, a greater alertness, and in some respects a greater wholeness of intelligence than one is apt to find elsewhere. It is not that the artists and the men of letters who live there have done work, which even on our American scale can be called great. It is rather that about them surges with all its fluctuating good and evil the irresistible tide of world-existence." That the body of New York life is big with important issues and events, and is somehow suggestive and provocative of a large literary treatment may be admitted, but the large literary treatment will not come in the absence of formative and invigorating intellectual conditions. The stimulus to great works of the imagination derives, not so much from the material offered by life, which always possesses dramatic and salient features, as from the mental attitude of certain gifted and trained people toward that material—an attitude that is formed chiefly by the sweep, intensity, coherence and momentum of the ideas which are currently applied to life. It cannot be said that uneasy and possessing ideas of this kind are at present keeping New York men of letters awake o' nights, but since New York is the most national of American cities, and since the culture basis of a modern literature or art is not municipal, or provincial, but necessarily national, New York is the one American city in which something considerable may happen. At the present moment there is negative if not positive ground for encouragement—in that the intellectual ideals of New Yorkers are at least normal and sane. They are holding a proper balance between over-refinement on the one hand and crudity on the other; and, consequently, if they are ever

touched by a little originality and energy they should not go astray.

Be it further claimed that a good beginning has been made in New York toward the realization of the better American political and social ideas. In no city in the country have political reformers had more cunning and stubborn enemies; and in no city has their success, temporary though it be, been more fairly deserved. For it has been based in some measure at least upon an attempt to realize a better social ideal. By far the most energetic and efficient element in the local Republican and Citizens' Union organizations are the men who are trying to bridge the gulf between the rich and the poor, the educated and the ignorant in this city. They are trying to do this by every available means—by improving the sanitary and economic position of the poor, by defending them against the most poisonous of their surrounding influences, and by inculcating among the better-to-do the desirability and the habit of coming into some personal relations with their poorer fellow-citizens. They realize that it is by these means only that Tammany can be permanently kept under; and it is safe to say that the eminence of New York among American cities depends upon nothing more than upon the permanent humiliation of that organization. Any city that wishes to put itself at the head of the higher ambitions of the American people must possess citizens who will take the social side of democracy more seriously than it has yet been taken in this country. The old careless, good-natured confidence that the best way to reach the consummate social condition is to let present evils take care of themselves must be abandoned and a more genuine solidarity of national and social feeling must be obtained, both by attacking social abuses more resolutely, and by a large infusion of public spirit and unselfish devotion to the welfare of others. This work must be done in the large cities, and it is encouraging to observe that New York is taking the lead in doing it. If New York can maintain that lead, it may exercise in the end as dominant and controlling position in the social and intellectual as it does in the financial and industrial life of the United States.

Herbert Croly.

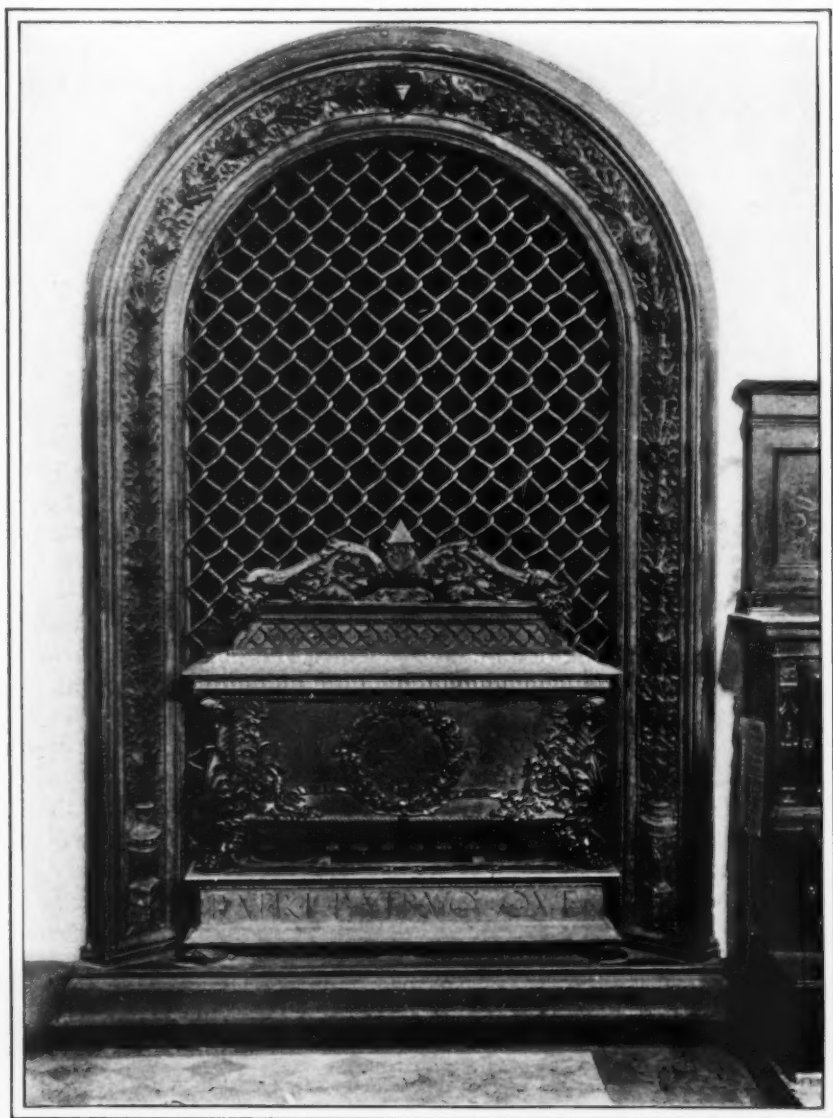


FROM time immemorial, every people, barbaric and civilized, have endeavored to perpetuate the memory of their dead. As a rule the more illustrious the memory to be honored, the greater the monument in size, or beauty, or in preciousness. There have been, however, marked departures from this practice, the memorial often being of far greater importance than the dead, its excellence as a work of art overshadowing the deeds of the deceased.

The memorials of the Egyptians, and other primitive civilized people, as well as many uncivilized races, were characterized by their size, or durability, or both; while those of the Greeks, and other cultured people of antiquity, together with those of Christendom, were of a higher order; artistic beauty was their first and most important attribute.

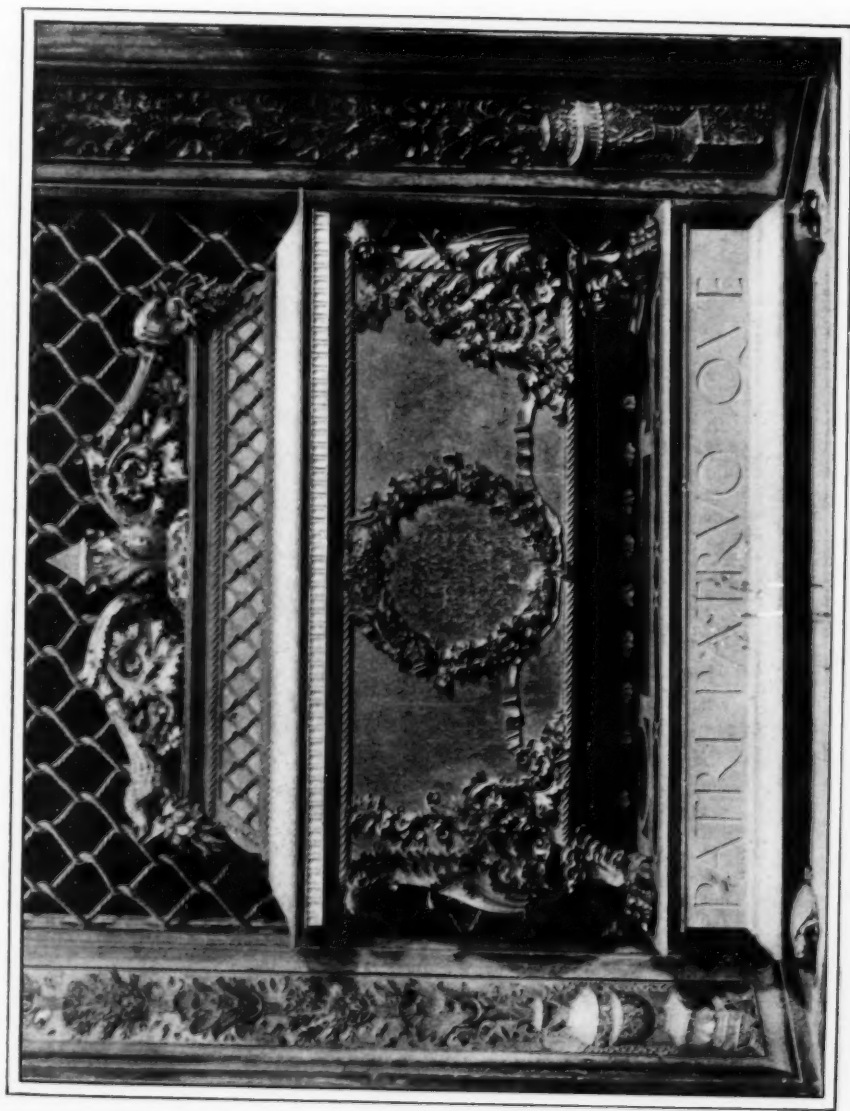
The memorials of the ancients were usually out-of-door constructions, those of the Christians in-door; the former were erected more for the glory of the living than of the dead; the latter for the glory of God, in honor of the dead, and as a provocative of the suffrages of the living.

The magnificent and beautiful monuments of the ancient Greeks, which were found some years ago in the cemetery, the *Kerameikos* just outside of Athens, invariably in their beauty idealize the life of the departed, recalling to the living sweet memories of that life, and the pleasures of earthly existence, unconcerned for the future, giving no hope of the joy of an everlasting reunion. On the other hand Christian memorials of every nation show forth the emptiness of life and its bitter sorrows, and, when they have not been affected by a paganizing influence, emphasize the doctrine that death is in truth the door to a better life. In other words, the mortuary art of paganism was purely objective, and that of Christianity, in its highest manifestations, was not only objective, but was also subjective, the external charm of form, color and composition giving



TOMB OF PIETRO AND GIOVANNI DE' MEDICI.

Sculptor, Andrea de Verrochio.



THE SARCOPHAGUS OF THE TOMB OF PIETRO AND GIOVANNI DE' MEDICI.
Sculptor, Andrea de Verrochio.

expression to an emotion of the soul; the sensuous leading the mind to the supersensuous. So markedly is this true that even the paganism of the Renaissance (the love of beauty for beauty's sake) could not eliminate sentiment from the art of the period.

This mixing of the old wine with the new, the material with the spiritual, is peculiarly characteristic of the works of Michael Angelo. Although in a number of his creations it would seem as if the objective were all in all, on closer study, it will be found that behind the form there is an abstraction of value, just as the form within a block of marble is concealed, until the sculptor liberates it—a thought beautifully expressed in one of his sonnets:

"The best of artists hath no thought to show
Which the rough stone in its superfluous shell
Doth not include; to break the marble spell
Is all the hand that serves the brain can do."

In Michael Angelo's sculptures of the Medicean tombs, so pagan in form, so apparently objective, there are profound questionings, sublime meditations upon some of the deepest problems within the ken of man. It is true that most men see in these statues masterly human figures and nothing more. The realm of ideas with which the great artist endowed them escapes their observation. But most men cannot read even the every-day secrets of their own hearts, much less the emotions of an artist soul mirrored in his works. "Oh, happy those few who sit at that table where the bread of angels is eaten."*

There are critics, however, who hold that the sentiments which these figures are supposed to express do not exist, outside of the mind of the student, who finds in them whatsoever he is looking for. In themselves they are purely objective.

If this were true, they would be mere copies of nature, and not works of art, for the mission of art is to represent nature, not copy it; otherwise a cast from a beautiful human form would be the highest realization of the sculptor's art. No! the true artists "force Nature to lie bare in her divine integrity." If this reasoning, in the case of Michael Angelo's works, is not sufficient to refute these critics, let them read the above quoted passage from one of the artist's sonnets, and also his answer to the lines written by Strozzi, on the statue of Night, which adorns the tomb of Giuliano De Medici:

"Night in so sweet an attitude behold
Asleep, was by an angel sculptured
In this stone; and sleeping, is alive;
Waken her doubter; she will speak to thee."

*Dante. *Conveto* *Trat* I. *Cap.* I.

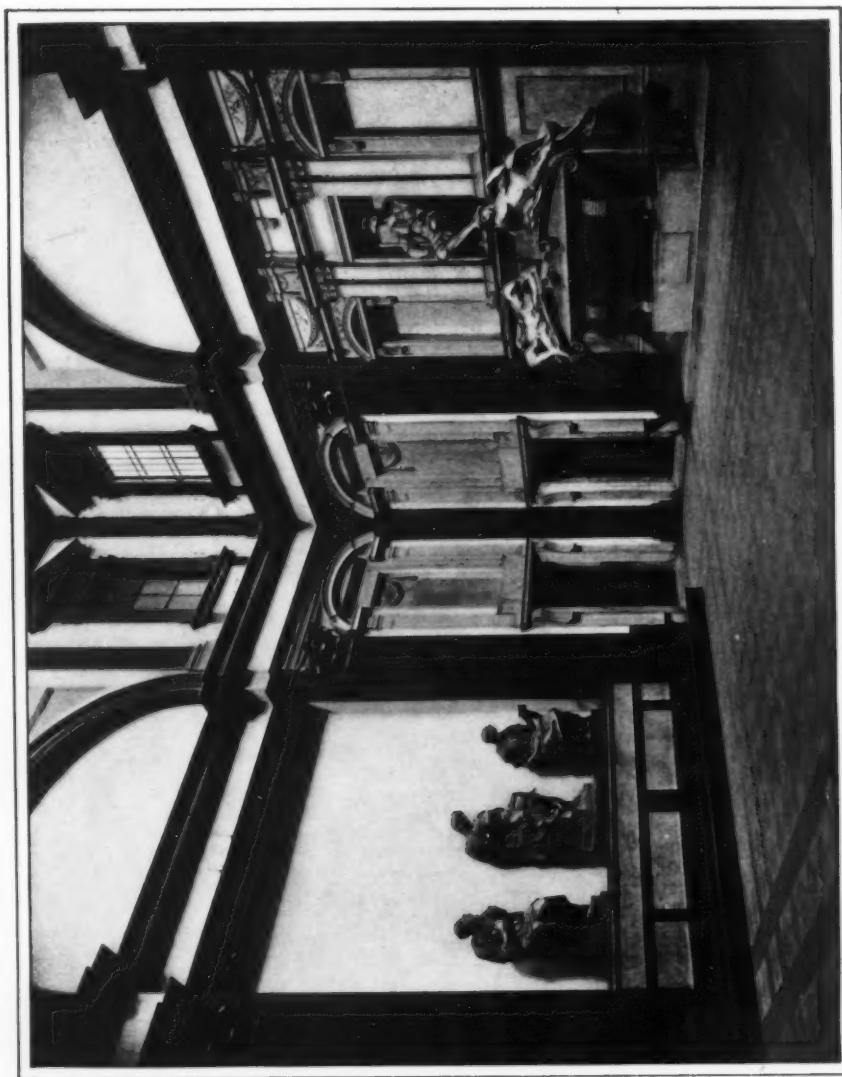
The sculptor replied:

"Welcome is sleep, more welcome sleep of stone
Whilst crime and shame continue in the land
My happy fortune not to see or hear;
Waken me not; in mercy whisper low."

The Medici family were so imbued with classical thought, and so little in sympathy with Christian ideals, that it is not surprising that their Mortuary Chapel should be strongly pagan in its architecture and decoration, although it may not be just to pass this judgment, in view of its unfinished condition, Michael Angelo, never having carried out his plan, except in parts, not even completing the sculpture he began.

Pope Leo X., Giovanni de Medici, the second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, in conjunction with his cousin, Cardinal Giulio de Medici, the natural son of Giuliano, who was assassinated by the Pozzi conspirators, wishing to honor the deceased members of their house, called upon Michael Angelo, in the year 1519, to design a Mortuary Chapel. This they purposed to add to S. Lorenzo at Florence, the parish church of the family, one of the most ancient ecclesiastical edifices in Italy, it having been consecrated by S. Ambrose in the year 393. In 1425 it suffered greatly from fire, but was subsequently rebuilt, largely at the expense of Giovanni d'Av-
erardo, called Bicci de Medici. As the restoration was not completed at his death in 1428, it was left to his son Cosmo de Medici, the elder, to proceed with the work, which he did, from the plans of Filippo Brunelleschi. At the same time he caused a tomb for his father to be constructed in the sacristy, employing Donatello for the purpose, he having in his mind to make S. Lorenzo the burial place of the Medici. Ultimately he himself was buried in the church at the foot of the High Altar. His grandson, Lorenzo the Magnificent, following out this idea of Cosmo, had Andrea de Verrocchio build a monumental tomb for his father Pietro and his uncle Giovanni de Medici. This tomb is a masterpiece of decorative art, placed in a window-like opening between the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament and that of the Blessed Virgin. The sarcophagus is of porphyry, supported on four bronze consols, resting on a base of marble, which in turn stands upon the basement of the wall dividing the above-named chapels, while the aperture, from the tomb to the soffit of the arch, is closed with a bronze grille.

In 1520, Michael Angelo, who was then in Rome, sent his plans and specifications for the Mortuary Chapel to Florence. His general scheme was to build a square chapel, lighted from above by a lantern open to the sky, the inside wall surface to be broken by pilasters, door and niches, the recesses to be filled with statues, and

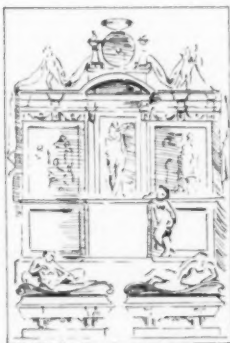


MORTUARY CHAPEL OF THE MEDICI.

Designer, Michael Angelo.

grouped in the center of the room, four sarcophagi. To this last feature the Cardinal objected; all else he approved; whereupon Michael Angelo modified his plans so as to place a sarcophagus against three of the walls and an altar against the fourth: that of Lorenzo de Medici, Duke of Urbino, on one side; Giuliano de Medici, Duke of Nemours; on the other, that of Lorenzo the Magnificent and his brother Giuliano against the wall facing the altar.

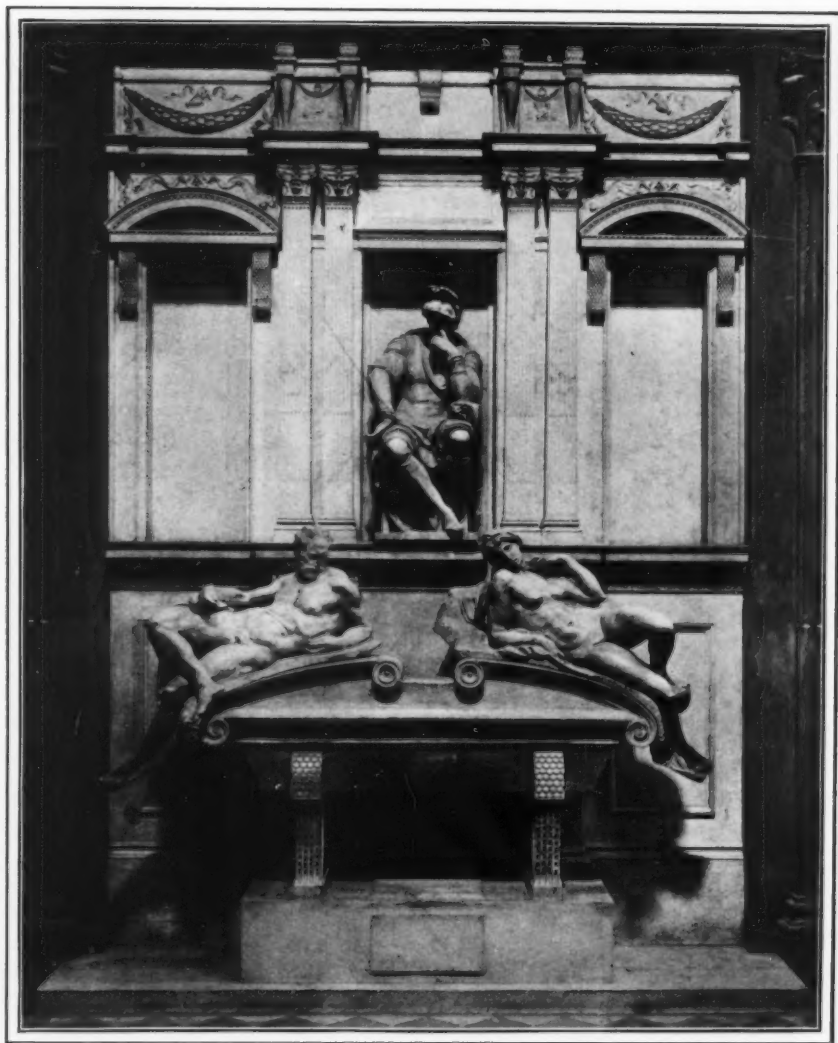
Just what Michael Angelo's design was for the tomb of *Il Magnifico* and his brother, which was never built, is somewhat of a mystery. It is true there is in existence a drawing, which for a long time was believed to be by the artist, showing an elevation of the tomb, or more correctly speaking, a double tomb with two sarcophagi, side by side; but now it is held to be the work of Sangallo for a number of good reasons, among others, because it is known from a letter of Michael Angelo to Fathicci, that his design called for a single tomb.



Design for the Tomb of Lorenzo the Magnificent by Sangallo; believed for a time to be by Michael Angelo.

Michael Angelo had scarcely begun the chapel when the work was interrupted by his going to Rome in December, 1521, to straighten out differences of opinion he had with the family of Pope Julius II. concerning that Pontiff's tomb; and he did not return to Florence until 1523, the year in which Cardinal Giulio de Medici was elected Pope under the name of Clement VII. Four years after the work was again brought to a standstill by the expulsion of the Medici, from Florence, the eleven months siege, and the flight of the artist to Venice; and it was not resumed until the Medici were once more firmly established in the city. Even after that the work was suspended from time to time, until it ceased altogether in 1533, when Michael Angelo left Florence for Rome, never to return. The chapel has remained, as it was left by the sculptor, in an unfinished condition to the present day.

This chapel "may be looked on either as the masterpiece of a sculptor who required fit setting for his statues, or of an architect who designed statues to enhance the structure he had planned. Both arts are used with equal ease, nor has the genius of Michael Angelo dealt more masterfully with the human frame than with the forms of Roman architecture in this chapel. He seems to have paid no heed to classic precedent, and to have taken no pains to adapt the parts to the structural purpose of the building. It was enough for him to create a wholly novel framework for the modern miracle of sculpture it enshrines, attending to such rules of composition as



TOMB OF LORENZO DE MEDICI, DUKE OF URBINO.
Sculptor, Michael Angelo.



IL PENSEROSO, STATUE OF LORENZO DE MEDICI, DUKE OF URBINO.
Sculptor, Michael Angelo.

determine light and shade, and seeking by the slightness of mouldings and pilasters to enhance the terrible and massive forms that brood above the Medicean tombs."*

In designing the tomb of Lorenzo de Medici he could have given little thought to the man in whose memory it was erected, as he was a prince of no power, insignificant and dissipated, a fit father of the vile queen of Henry II. of France—Catharine de Medici; but here, as in the tomb of Giuliano, he purposed to symbolize the profound questionings of the soul—the strife of the soul with the burden of the passions and troubles of life, and its ceaseless yearnings for rest.

In the statue of Lorenzo, "silent and tragic beneath his warrior's casque," there is no attempt at portraiture. It is a figure of a great mind: *Il Penseroso*, brooding in solitude, without human sympathy, over the figures at his feet: Dawn and Twilight, the beginning and the waning of life, the awaking to its joys and sorrows, and its sinking into rest—farewell—death.

"He who ordained, when first the world began,
Time that was not before creation's hour,
Divided it, and gave the sun's high power
To rule the one, the moon the other spans:
Thence fate and changeable chance and fortune's ban
Did in one moment down on mortals shower:
To me they portioned darkness for a dower;
Dark hath my lot been since I was a man."[†]

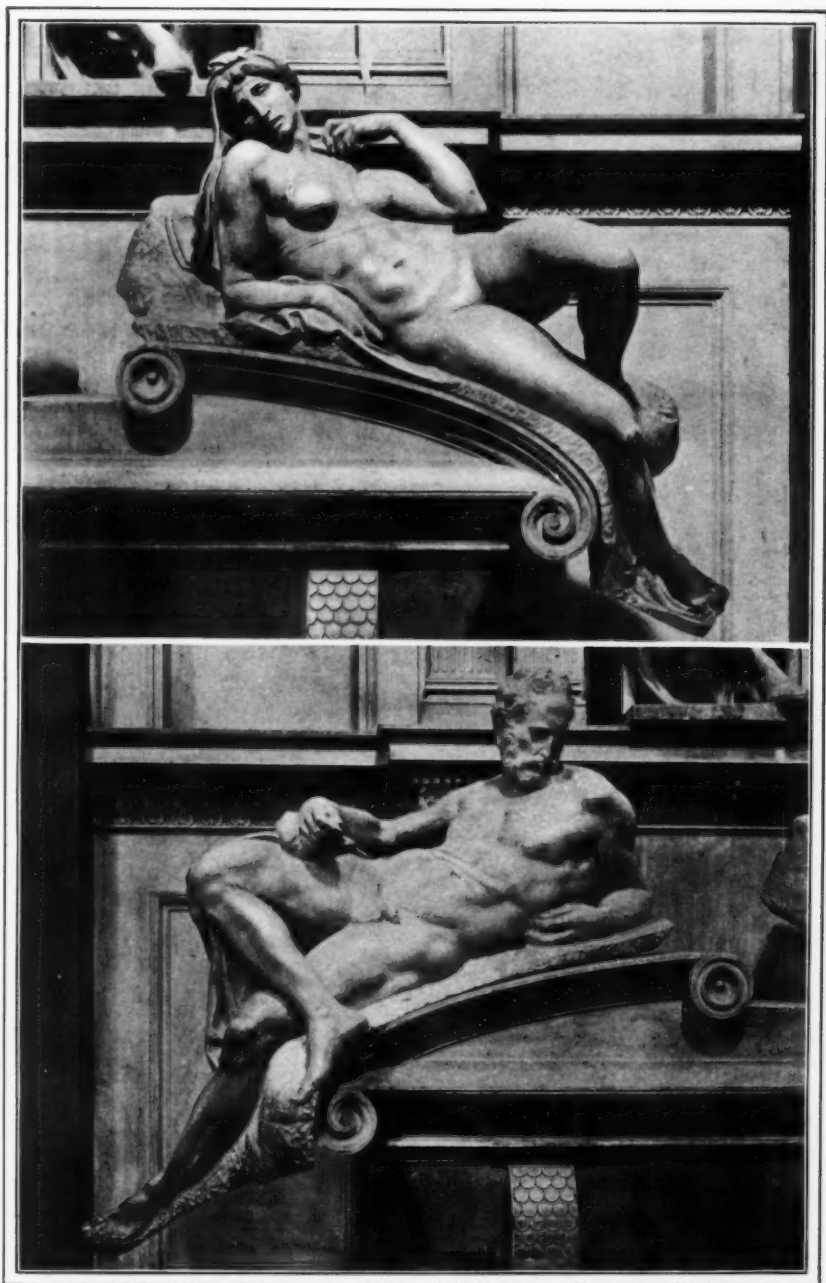
The statue of Giuliano de Medici is not equal in force or interest to that of his nephew Lorenzo, nevertheless it is the figure of a thoughtful man, although not one who has reached the last thought, but still finds something in life worthy of his ambition, and this in spite of the lesson the reclining figures on his sarcophagus continually teach:

Day and night, man and woman, power and weakness the nothingness of the utmost human endeavor, which inevitably will be effaced by death. This lesson would have been emphasized if the niches at the side of the statue of Giuliano had been filled, as Michael Angelo intended doing, with figures of Earth and Heaven; the former in an attitude of sorrow, the latter in that of joy.

The tomb of the *Il Magnifico*, the most illustrious of his race, as has been said above, was never finished; all that was accomplished was the figure of the Madonna and Child, the work of Michael Angelo, and the statues of S. Cosmos and St. Damien; the first sculptured by Montorsoli and retouched by the Great Master; the last made by Baccio de Montelupo, from a model of Michael Angelo's. These statues were placed upon the box-like tomb, which encloses

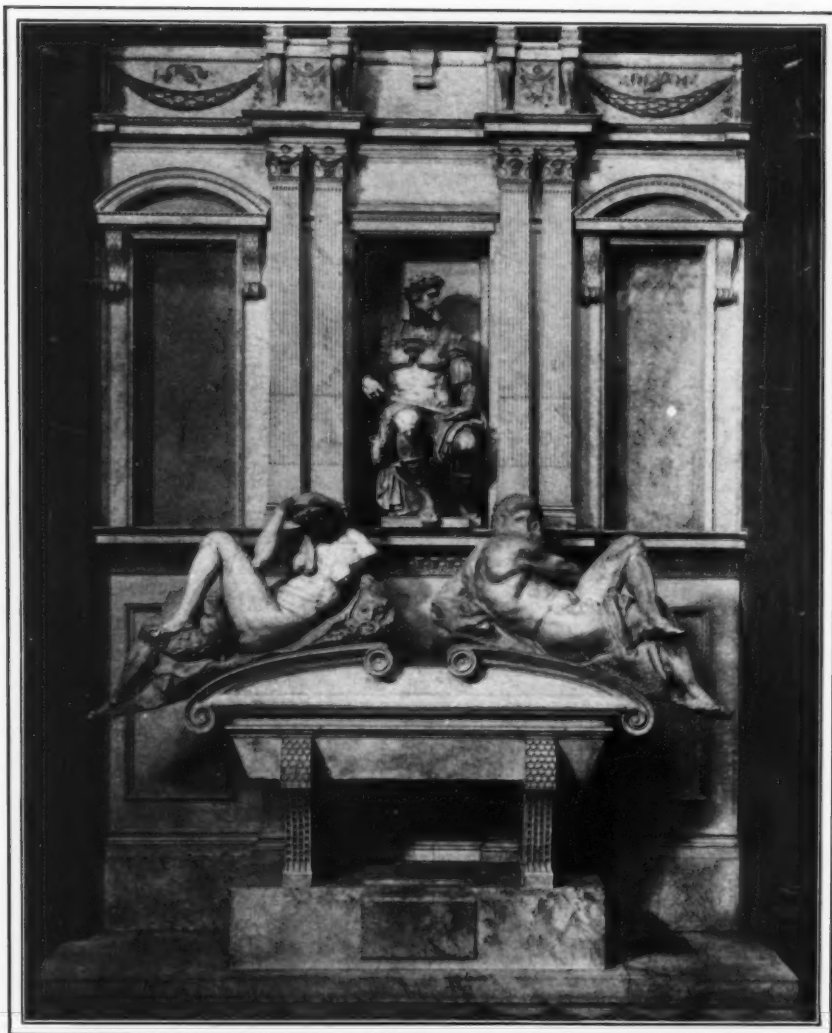
*Symonds—Renaissance in Italy—Vol. 3.

†From Michael Angelo's sonnet *Colin che Fece*.



FIGURES OF "TWILIGHT" AND "DAWN," FROM THE TOMB OF LORENZO DE MEDICI, DUKE OF URBINO.

Sculptor, Michael Angelo.



TOMB OF GIULIANO DE MEDICI, DUKE OF NEMOURS.

Sculptor, Michael Angelo.



FIGURE OF "NIGHT," FROM THE TOMB OF GIULIANO DE' MEDICI, DUKE OF NEMOURS.
Sculptor, Michael Angelo.

the remains of Lorenzo the Magnificent and his youngest brother Giuliano, by Vasar, who was ordered by the Grand Duke Cosmo I. to complete the chapel, after Michael Angelo refused to proceed with the work.

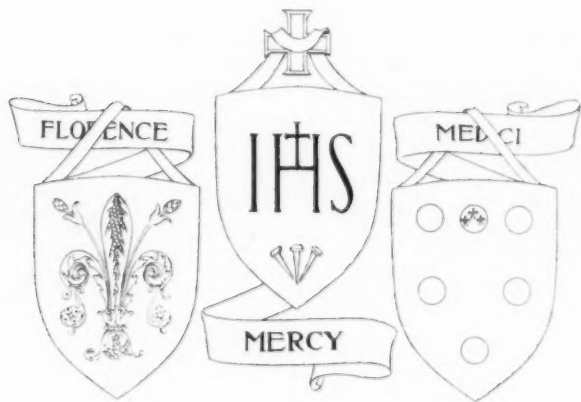
Michael Angelo's self-respect and great integrity would not allow him, after the death of Clement VII., the last Medici worthy of his house, to continue to glorify by his genius a family that had become a race of degenerates and tyrannized over his beloved Florence, so he left the Chapel unfinished and its sculpture incomplete. His own days were numbered, he stood alone among men: "I have," he said, "no friends, I need none, and wish to have none." His soul was filled with contempt for the praises of the crowd, a contempt which he most forcibly expressed in the following words:

"Ill hath he chosen his part, who seeks to please the worthless world." And his heart was burdened with sadness; he writes to Vasari in 1554, "Man should not be gay when all the world is sad."

It is to be wished that the Great Master had completed the Chapel and its accessories. Nevertheless, in its seeming incompleteness there is a grandeur and sublimity which must forever call forth the admiration and the wonder of the thoughtful.

There are a number of other Medicean tombs and memorials of some artistic value beside those in the Mortuary Chapel of S. Lorenzo, although of little moment in comparison, such as the tombs of Leo X. and Clement VII., in the Dominican Church of S. Maria sopra Minerva at Rome, the work of Baccio Bandinelli, adorned with statues by Raffaelli da Montelupo and Baccio Bigio.

Caryl Coleman.



✓ PORTRAIT STATUETTES.

A New Fashion in French Sculpture.

FOR many centuries the bust has been almost the only form in which portraits were executed in marble, metal, or plastic materials, and the older form of sculpture—the statuette—was comparatively neglected. This is the more singular because the bust is never decorative, and requires more space for its proper exhibition than the ordinary dwelling-house will afford, whilst the stat-



PORTRAIT STATUETTE OF MADAME R— D—.

Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.

uette is ornamental, can be placed in almost any situation, and requires no pedestal, alcove, or other accessories. On the other hand, it has disadvantages from which the bust is exempt. The execution of a small full-length figure in marble requires more work from the sculptor than a large bust would, for, in the latter case, much of the rough cutting would be done by the "scarpellino," or "chisel-



PORTRAIT STATUETTE OF MME. J— S—.

Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.



STATUE OF "LA PARISIENNE," ON TOP OF THE MAIN ENTRANCE
TO THE PARIS EXPOSITION.

Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.



UNFINISHED PORTRAIT STATUETTE OF MME. DE B.
Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.



UNFINISHED PORTRAIT STATUETTE.

Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.



PORTRAIT STATUETTE OF MME. DE A— G—.
Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.

man," whereas the delicate chiselling of the small figure would all have to be performed by the artist's hand.

One of the latest crazes of the Parisian fashionable lady is to have in her "salon" small full-length figures of herself and her lady friends. To meet this demand, a very talented artist, M. Moreau-Vauthier, and several other French sculptors now produce small portrait figures in bronze, which has been found to be the material most suitable. Marble would come very expensive, on account of the work involved, besides which it is difficult to preserve the likeness correctly in a small figure. Clay and plaster both look common, and might be taken by the uninitiated for the wares of the itinerant Italian boy; and wood is not exactly suitable for our northern climates. In the last Salon there were several of these portraits in little, which had been cast in gilt-bronze or silvered metal from the clay or plaster figure. M. Moreau-Vauthier, who is making a specialty of this branch of art, not only catches a likeness very cleverly, but excels in modelling modern costume. It may be remembered that it was he who designed the enormous figure of "Paris Welcoming Her Guests" which stood on the summit of the principal entrance to the International Exhibition of 1900.

M. Moreau-Vauthier's principal contribution this year was the portrait of Mme. R— D—. The pose is easy and graceful, and the technical difficulties of the very complicated costume and the sofa have been most skilfully overcome, not only by the artist but by the founder. The statuette in white metal is less ambitious and less effective. It is a portrait of Mme. J— S—, the wife of a well-known lawyer.

The other four statuettes have not yet been cast in metal, and were photographed at the foundry. They are portraits of four ladies who are great friends, and four casts of each figure will be taken, in order that each lady may possess a complete set. They are all of them customers of Paquin, the celebrated Paris dress-maker, and knowing that M. Moreau-Vauthier excelled in reproducing costumes, one of them suggested that they should be represented as "Spring," "Summer," "Autumn," and "Winter."

"Spring," Mlle. J— S— is a particularly graceful little figure and all the others are easy and natural. The figures do not exceed ten inches in height; some of the fine work—the necklace, jewelry, and embroidery—is almost microscopical.

Though, for several years past, there have been a few of these portrait-statuettes exhibited at the Salon and other exhibitions, they never appeared to be popular either with artists or public, and it is only within the last few months that there seems to be a great demand for them. Rumor says that several well-known American ladies have expressed their intention of having their statuettes exe-



M. MOREAU-VAUTHIER IN HIS STUDIO.



"WINTER."

Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.



"SPRING."

Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.



"SUMMER."

Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.

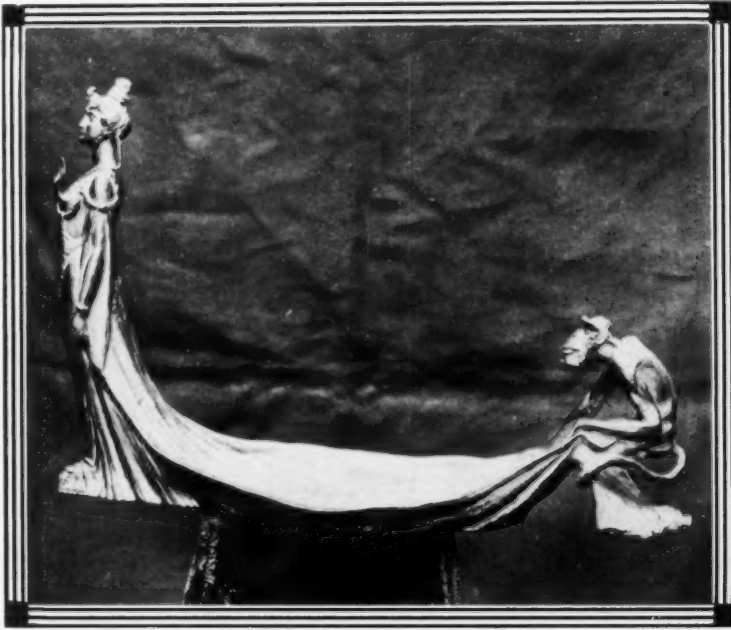


"AUTUMN."

Scu'p'tor. M. Mo eau-Vauthier.

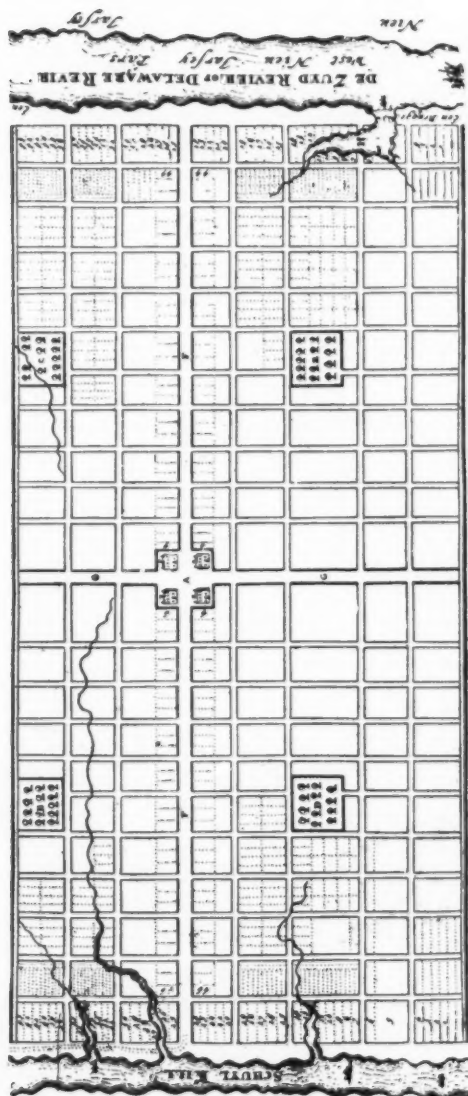
cuted in gilt-bronze as soon as they return to Paris for the season, and it is probable that next year's Salon will contain many charming specimens of this style of art. It is not often that fashion hits upon such a good idea, and can go hand in hand with art. A statuette executed by a skilful sculptor conveys an idea of life and movement which is never found in the old-fashioned academical bust, and very rarely even in a photograph.

Frederic Lees.



ASH-TRAY IN BRONZE.

Sculptor, M. Moreau-Vauthier.



William Penn's plan of the City of Philadelphia. The idea of straight streets and rectangular blocks without curves or diagonals has been carried out in the enlarged city, while the system of small parks has not.

THE STREET PLAN OF A CITY'S BUSINESS DISTRICT.

MODERN civic art, when it has fixed certain definite foci, when it has determined that here shall be the formal entrance to the town by water, there its entrance for those who come by land, and that in such a place its public business shall be transacted; when it has laid down the principle that an open space is desirable at each of these "nerve centres," and that important streets should converge to them—civic art, when it has established these bases and gone so far, is ready to take up the larger and more intricate problem of the "street plan" of the business district. The problem is important, interesting, and difficult. In the anatomy of the city there is no point at which the circulatory demands are so great, so insistent, so impatient, or where failure to provide adequately for them is so injurious. In the existing city there is no portion where it is more difficult to make changes, nor is there any district that has been allowed to grow with so little scientific planning.

In the average town in the United States the broad straight main street of the village has become in fact, as it already is in name, the main thoroughfare of the town. From it the business has overflowed into a series of narrow streets crossing it at right angles, and if one of these be broad, it may extend some distance on it. The arrangement, stretching the business along two sides of an uncompleted triangle, is the most inconvenient possible, involving greatest loss of energy and time. Or the business having found no cross street of especial invitation, may extend equally along a series of them, and then spread over a thoroughfare that, paralleling the main street, connects them. So it will overflow a rectangle, and perhaps a series of these, until there is a large business district tending to the rectangular. In no other equal area is space so precious, or time and distance more important factors, yet to go from any point on one street to any point on one that is parallel, two sides of the triangle must be traversed. Furthermore, the traffic, far larger than had been intended for these streets, doubtless chokes them. Every slowly moving truck impedes every vehicle behind it. The great business houses, barely seen from the mean and narrow thoroughfares, lose their dignity. Rapid transit facilities, crowded on to one or two broad highways, contract these for general traffic, and, so far as it is on the surface, is itself delayed. In London where, thanks to excellent police regulation, the traffic moves with relative celerity, a calculation has been made that "every omnibus and cab that uses the main streets of the 'city' and its approaches, is delayed on an average half an hour each day

through blocks and partial blocks." Could the money loss of this to passengers in cab and omnibus be estimated, consider what would be the aggregate!

A problem that, for all its difficulty, so urgently invites solution, has not lacked for thought. There are such practical requirements that civic art must have had pressing claims to be heard among them; and yet it is heard, for if the heart of the city be not imposing, if there be here no handsome sites, no stateliness, no majestic thoroughfares, and the convenience of the city's business be not consulted, the modern city has lamentably failed to realize the ends of civic art. The courage with which this hardest of all the problems has been attacked in the world's great cities is one of the most interesting and inspiring, as it is one of the most suggestive, episodes in the history that relates the rise of the new ideal for cities—that ideal born of new conditions and which cannot, therefore, be a fruitless dream.

This essential newness of the problem is well illustrated by one of the most striking attempts that have been made to solve it. On Christmas day in 1857, as a result of preliminary agitation, Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria issued a decree addressed to the minister of the interior, requiring that "the enlargement of the inner city of Vienna, for the purpose of its suitable connection with the suburbs, should be undertaken as speedily as possible." It was suggested that the surrounding fortifications and ditches, which are always the great opportunity of the cramped old foreign cities, be removed, and that at the same time there be made adequate provision of sites for a new war office, a city marshal's office, an opera house, imperial archives, a town hall, and the necessary buildings for museums and galleries. The decree required that there be opened a competition for plans for the improvement, the jury to consist of a commission of high officials representing various interests, these commissioners before making the awards, however, to "submit the plans to a committee of specialists appointed by them." Three designs were to be selected for prizes and the premiums were to be 2,000, 1,000 and 500 gold ducats. This was the opportunity the perception and courageous seizure of which has since made Vienna so superb and famous. Eighty-five designs were submitted, and, though none of the premiated plans was literally carried out, they gave suggestions and set the standard for the final scheme. But this, as the decree required, dealt rather with the enlargement of the inner city and its convenient connection with the suburbs than with a remodeling of the district itself. Thirty-five years later, then, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the municipality took up the latter problem, inviting the architects and engineers of the world to compete in the submission of plans for the remodel-

ing of old central Vienna. There were two prizes of 10,000 florins, three of 5,000 and three of 3,000 florins. For "part designs which do not comprise the whole city, but consider only a few questions of the improvement, or means of communication," there were prizes of 3,000 florins and under; and finally prizes were promised for plans that were good in parts though not satisfactory as a whole. The jury was composed mainly of professors, leading architects, and engineers, and far off Vienna proved again that she had nothing to learn either as to modern municipal ideals or civic spirit from Berlin or Paris or Rome, or from the hurrying cities of England and America.

The early days of Philadelphia and New York offered exceptional opportunities for a scientific planning of the business districts of communities that, as even then could be foreseen, were destined to become great cities. That the outcome in each case is a failure, an example of what not to do, shows how little progress had yet been made in the physical science of cities. There was, however, consciousness of the problem and its thoughtful consideration. For Philadelphia no less a personage than William Penn made a plan. Its feature was a long series of rectangles that were almost squares, the straight streets unrelieved by curve or diagonal, with two of the streets, which crossed at right angles in a big open space nearly in the middle of the tract, considerably broader than the others. If there was little of art or science about the design, there was enough forethought to appreciate the value of frequent open spaces—for the admission of light and air to a crowded district, for the provision of good building sites on the ground facing the public areas, and for relieving the monotony of the district. Penn's plan shows five such spaces, each half as large again as an ordinary block, in a district only five blocks broad by twenty-two long.* Had the same proportion been secured for the closely built up sections of the city when it extended beyond this district—as the Consolidation Act of 1854 directed should be done—there would have been 280 small parks in the city plan of Philadelphia at the beginning of the twentieth century instead of the 45 that were actually there. But there was not enough public appreciation of the importance of the problem to secure the adoption of even the one redeeming feature of Penn's plan. The straight streets and rectangular blocks, unrelieved by frequent open spaces, extended over the growing city and were adopted as a model by the 30 or more outlying towns and villages that have since been incorporated in it.

When New York came to wrestle with the problem, in 1807, the public held it serious enough to demand the consideration of a

*The area between Vine and South Streets and the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers.

formally appointed commission. This laid down—tradition says with a mason's hand seive—the familiar gridiron plan. The one irregular thoroughfare was Broadway, already a road of too much importance to be molested, and to that happy chance New York owes the only opportunities for civic stateliness of beauty afforded in its street arrangement. Broadway has developed, too, as the great business street, just as the diagonal Ridge Avenue in Philadelphia has become, in spite of its narrowness, a street of shops. If as wisely remarked, "the shop-keepers go where the travel is," the value of the diagonal thoroughfare for circulatory purposes is attested.

But there are other faults in the rectilinear plan. Frederick Law Olmsted has put some of them well in saying of the commission's work, "Some two thousand blocks were provided, each theoretically two hundred feet wide, no more, no less; and ever since, if a building site is wanted, whether with a view to a church or a blast furnace, an opera house, or a toy shop, there is, of intention, no better place in one of these blocks than in another. * * * If a proposed cathedral, military depot, great manufacturing enterprise, house of religious seclusion or seat of learning needs a space of ground more than sixty-six yards in extent, from north to south, the system forbids that it shall be built in New York. * * * There is no place in New York where a stately building can be looked up to from base to turret, none where it can even be seen full in the face and all at once taken in by the eye; none where it can be viewed in advantageous perspective. * * * Such distinctive advantage of position as Rome gives St. Peter's, Paris the Madeleine, London, St. Paul's, New York, under her system, gives to nothing." The plan offers the maximum of building area, but the minimum of effect.

Costly failures where there might have been magnificent successes are not confined to the United States. If modern civic art has learned the world over a lesson, if it has been taught to recognize the worth of a street plan for the business district that shall consult convenience of travel and stateliness of result, it has done so by dear experience widely distributed. To devise on paper a plan intelligent and comprehensive required no impossible genius; to secure public appreciation of such a plan required examples not only of its success but of the failure of simpler plans. In London after the great fire there was presented an opportunity as thrilling as any that America has had. Here in the heart of the world's greatest and richest city, a large district could be replanned. There was a genius who saw the chance and contrived a scheme that would have rendered London superb among the cities of to-day; but the design of Sir Christopher Wrenn was in advance of the age,

and you must seek diligently now to find it in the archives of an Oxford College. Four hundred and thirty-six acres had been burned over; a cathedral and eighty-seven churches were to be rebuilt; a site was to be found for a new exchange and for other public buildings, and of about 14,000 structures, some of which might have stood in the way of a new planning, not one was left.

But London was rebuilt in the old way, and such improvements as have since been made, unsatisfactory as they are, have cost enormously. From 1798 to 1821 ten select committees made reports on particular improvements. In another twenty years, from 1832 to 1851, Parliament appointed eleven or twelve select committees to take into consideration plans for the improvement of London and to advise as to the best means for carrying out the plans. These committees did little more than report on the causes of the crowding—which were obvious enough—and on the difficulty of making changes owing to the great cost. All this was impressing the lesson. At last, however, conditions became so serious that enormous expenses had to be assumed. In the thirty-four years from 1855 to 1889 the metropolitan board of works expended upon street changes and improvements more than fifteen millions sterling. The net cost, after recoupments from the sale of surplus land, exceeded ten millions sterling, while a million and a half pounds more had been paid out by the board in grants to local districts, to aid them in bearing the cost of the smaller street improvements. It was at about the end of this period that the chairman of the improvement committee of the London county council observed that the streets of London measured some 2,000 miles, and that in the thirty years ending with 1889 the board of public works had succeeded, with its great expenditure, in constructing a total length of $15\frac{1}{5}$ miles of new streets, with an average width of sixty feet. He noted this with pride; but those who knew Wrenn's plan, who recalled how easily it might have been adopted, and its lines extended over the whole metropolitan area as London stretched farther into the country, saw only pathos in his figures, and realized more keenly the value of care in original street planning.

The plan of Sir Christopher Wrenn for the rebuilding of burned London was in accord with the principles of civic art as they are recognized to-day. Wrenn was surveyor-general, so that his masterly design took a natural precedence; it was accepted also by the King; and what now seems the mere accident of a lack of ever so little ready money and a desire for haste was allowed to prevent the future splendor and convenience of the great city. The main features of his plan, which well repays study, were to be, going from west to east (1), a circular space at the top of Fleet Street Hill, about on the site of St. Dunstan's Church. From this eight streets



WREN'S PLAN FOR REBUILDING LONDON.

The tracing is from Reginald Bloomfield's "History of Renaissance Architecture in England, 1500-1800."

- A. Crown of Fleet St. Hill, about the site of St. Dunstan's Church.
- B. St. Paul's.
- C. Royal Exchange.
- D. Topographical centre.

were to radiate, the eight to be connected with one another at a suitable distance from the centre by cross streets, these forming an octagon in relation to the circle; (2), a triangular space in full view from Fleet Street Hill. This was to widen toward the east and was to include St. Paul's and Doctors' Commons; (3) an open space in the centre of which should stand, on its old site, the Royal Exchange, and grouped around this space were to be the public buildings. From this space, which was to be the topographical centre, there were to radiate ten streets, each sixty feet wide. Three of these reached directly down to the river, offering from it a noble view of the Exchange. Along the river bank there was to be a broad quay, and opposite London Bridge a large semi-circular space with arterial streets radiating outward. Here and there, where radials of different systems crossed, there were established new open spaces and new centres. The plan showed, in brief, that use of broad straight streets linked together by monumental buildings, that provision of commanding sites for important structures, that use of diagonals, of open areas and of curving streets with their changing viewpoints, which the accepted plans of Paris, of Vienna, and of Washington have now made familiar.

The opportunity was allowed to pass, and all the subsequent and costly changes in the London plan have proved inadequate, because it has been impossible since to devise and carry out a single comprehensive scheme that should bring every part into direct relations with every other. In all street planning there must be regard for the through lines of travel as surely as for the local, and it is these through courses, which scattered improvements fail to benefit to any great extent. The through travel, in its usually heavy volume, demands arterial thoroughfares that shall be wide, uniform in their width, straight, of easy gradient, and on the direct line between important foci. These requirements alone involve a certain dignity of aspect. To gain the best spectacular results, however, civic art must be mindful also of other factors. Perhaps the most notable of these in the business district is the architectural effect.

The relation between the architecture and the street plan is reciprocal. Each can do so much for the other that while, on the one hand, a street may be opened or widened simply that a monumental structure may be the better seen, on the other hand the precise location of a new street may be determined by the position of existing structures that are prominent, according as they would or would not close the vista of the street, and so enhance its beauty. For civic art does not hold mere distance to be fine. It would set up visible limits, or at least accents, and its ideal would be to proportion the breadth of the thoroughfare to the distance between these limits or main accents. We have seen in this connection how Sir

Christopher Wrenn built up his street plan from the focal points offered by important buildings and then on the minor axes obtained variety of treatment. We may observe also how the Arc de Triomphe in Paris is made a topographical centre whence twelve great streets radiate, and how fully again the method is exemplified in the plan of Washington.

A few years ago there was a project on foot in Brussels to prolong a certain street* in order to establish direct communication between two important points. The utilitarian advantages of the proposed street were overwhelming, but the matter was not decided until that national society of workers for civic art, *L'Oeuvre Nationale Belge*, had prepared a report on the æsthetic effect. This report showed what view of the Palais de Justice the new street would reveal, what views it would afford of two churches that were on its line, the character of the new view it would open of the Hôtel de Ville, and finally what would be the general aspect of the street itself and of the lateral streets as seen from it. The incident is a happy illustration of the many points that civic art would have kept in mind when arranging or changing the street plan of a city's centre.

And there are some other requirements even than these. There is to be considered the general line of frontage, or building line, for this may be set back to widen a narrow street; the erection of porticos over the walk, the projection and height of balconies and awnings, and finally the regulation of building heights if we would have an imposing thoroughfare. In the European cities, where more frequently than in the United States the central authority pushes new streets through closely built up districts, there are statutes to control all these matters; and though these deal so directly with the architectural aspect of the city that they may be considered more fittingly under that head, it is well to observe here that their special design is to preserve the dignity of the street.

In laying down, then, an ideal street plan, for the business district of a city, there should be first a comprehensive scheme, a skeleton of arterial thoroughfares to provide for the through travel from point to point. These great roads will be direct, broad, straight, and free from heavy grades. At the focal points there will be open spaces, and from these the great streets will radiate. Then, in laying down the precise location of any one of them, we shall note what views it opens, what its accents are, and, if possible, we shall proportion its width to its length or seeming length. On the lateral and minor streets, designed for local traffic, we shall obtain a pleasing variety in the street lines—even if it be only that of sudden regularity. Later on we will safeguard the appearance of the

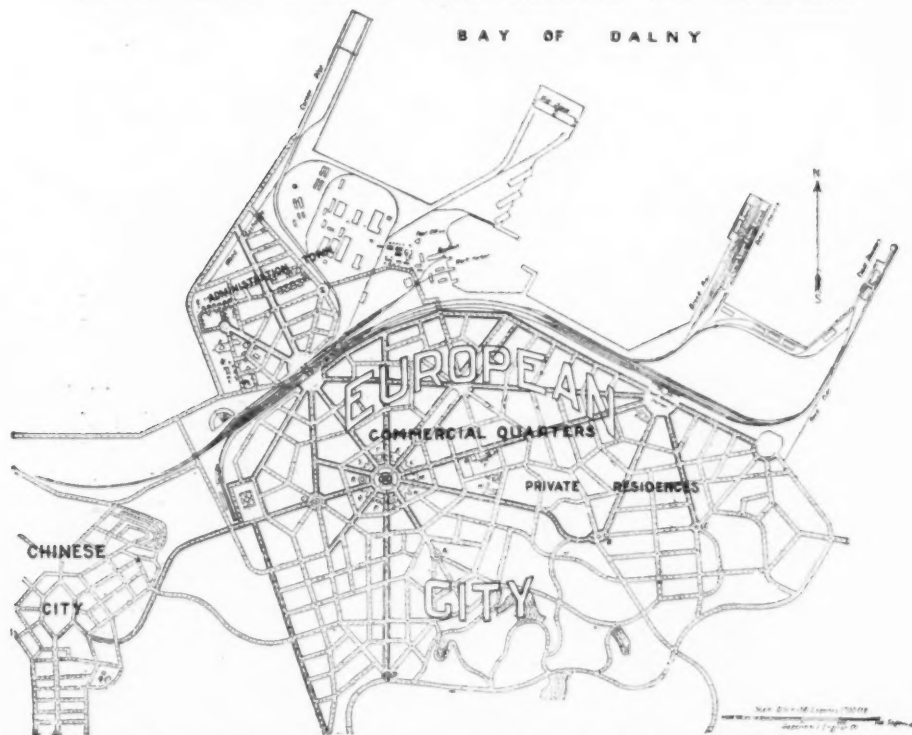
*The Rue du Lombard toward the Rue Saint-Jean.

street by building regulations ; we may even swerve it a little to preserve an historic or beautiful edifice ; and we will take care that if it is to pass upon viaduct or bridge, or if a bridge is to be suspended over it, the majesty and beauty of the street be not destroyed by a hideous structure. In carelessness of civic art, in haste, in wonder at the prowess of modern industrialism and awe of our cunning with iron and steel, we have suffered a hopelessly unæsthetic truss bridge, cheaply made and quickly put together, to become a common and well nigh prevailing type. The marvel is not that iron and steel are used, but that we submit to their use in ugly lines. Suppose, it has been suggested, that under the eaves of Notre Dame in Paris, there were, instead of the graceful sweeps of the arched bridge across the Seine, a couple of truss constructions—like, for example, the bridge by which rich Chicago has permitted State Street to be disfigured. How the aspect not of a street alone, but of Paris, would be changed !

As to focal points—the government buildings, the entrances to the town, by water and by land—these are sure receiving and distributing centres. Wrenn's plan has suggested the artificial creation of additional and local, foci at convenient points, and the plan of Paris shows how such topographical centres may be located with reference to monumental constructions (as the Arc de Triomphe) that are not in themselves magnets of travel, but the conspicuousness of which is desirable spectacularly. That the creation of such local centres may very greatly enhance the commercial value of certain building sites, in the business districts of cities, is obvious enough. But the importance of the focus can be still further enhanced, so that it becomes more than local.

An interesting example is found in the plan of Dalny, the new city that Russia is building as a Pacific seaport terminal for its Trans-Siberian railroad. The street plan of this entire city was made in the office of the Russian engineers before any building was commenced. There are many diagonal arterial thoroughfares, the crossing points of the different systems of radials creating local centres, and in front of the railway station there is a plaza which is an important centre. But in the heart of the town a circular public space has been laid out. Ten long straight streets converge upon it, joined in the circular street that forms the circle's circumference. Built around this, with excellent effect it can be imagined, there are ten structures, each in its separate little block. Yet they include—and it must be remembered that the list was made out in an office, before a house had been put up—buildings of as little individual importance as a private bank (three), a theatre, a club house, a post and telegraph office. Still the aggregate result, the town hall and some government offices being added, locates the heart of the city.

THE CITY THAT WAS MADE TO ORDER.



DALNY, RUSSIA'S RAILWAY TERMINAL AND SEAPORT CITY ON THE PACIFIC OCEAN, BUILT BY ORDER OF THE CZAR

- KEY TO THE MAP:
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| A. Church. | E. Museum. | I. Hotel. | M. Theatre. | P. Judge's Office. | T. Private Bank. | W. Doy's Museum. |
| B. Catholic Church. | F. Mayor's Office. | K. Russo-Chinese Bank. | N. Post and Telegraph. | Q. Town Committee. | U. Auction Hall and Exchange. | X. Girls' Museum. |
| C. English Church. | G. Mayor's House. | L. Town Club. | O. Private Bank. | R. Police Office. | V. Market Hall. | Z. Small Church. |
| D. English Chapel. | H. Officer's Quarters. | | | S. Private Bank. | | |

It is a valuable suggestion for towns of minor importance, a suggestion to the worth of which the old villages of New England bring a strangely distant evidence in the naturalness with which their most consequential structures gather around the Common in the centre of the village.

But the opportunity for new planning on the scale of Dalny may come only once in a hundred years. Such transformations as have been wrought in Paris and Vienna, such extensive changes of street plan and aspect as Berlin and Rome have brought about, such a magnificent study as has been made for Washington, are possible only under a government that is locally autocratic. Most cities of England, and especially of America, must make their revisions step by step. For this there is no less need of a good general scheme. That every step may count, that every improvement shall bring a little nearer to realization that complete scheme which would be best, there must be a fixed ideal in mind. That is why civic art insists so earnestly on the value of the principles of a general street plan. If we have not these we shall be in danger of widening at great cost a street that comes from nowhere and leads to nothing, that for all its width will be deserted because the through travel takes a route that is more direct; we shall be opening spaces to which there is no convergence of thoroughfares, or we shall make a mockery of "improvement" by choking a corner with criss-cross travel through focusing important streets where there is only a street's width to handle the converging traffic.

That such dangers are before us always, that the problem of the street plan even in the business district is not theoretic, there is abundant proof. Consider the changes that London is making, while this is written, in the widening of the Strand and the opening of the great new thoroughfare from Holborn to the Strand. In New York the administration is having public hearings on the plans for street approaches to the new bridges. In Pittsburg the Architectural Club has lately had a competition of plans "for the improvement of the down town district." In Toronto the like project is under earnest public discussion. In San Francisco it has been seriously taken up. New stations, new bridges, new buildings, and, above all, the growing congestion of an increasing population—so sadly felt where there is no scientific plan of circulation—are forcing these problems ever before us.

When the new charter for Greater New York was prepared, the need of rectifying the street system, and of doing this in accordance with a comprehensive scheme that should not be unduly influenced by local considerations, was felt so keenly that provision was made for a general board of public improvements. An accident of politics composed the first board of incompetent men, and in disgust

the board was abolished when the charter was revised. But the need remained, and there came to be demanded even the creation of an expert commission, such as that which was working so successfully for Washington. The problem in its universal application is not, as we have seen, merely that of circulation. The traffic is not alone in clamoring for its solution. It is presented also that adequate building sites may be provided—sites that may be large enough for a great building, sites to which impressiveness of effect belong, and to which there may be noble approaches, sites that can offer a frontage on at least three streets without the necessity of owning half a block.

There is, perhaps, too common a notion that the way to secure comfort and convenience for the travel and to bestow on the business district of a city splendor of appearance is simply to widen streets. As well might one think that the one way to emphasize a word in speaking is to scream it and therein lay the secret of the art of oratory! The error must be clear from what has been said; but to emphasize it we may note that in Paris the Avenue de l'Opera is 120 feet wide and the Rue de Rivoli 100 feet wide, while in London, Holborn, Oxford Street and Bayswater Road are 70 feet broad (and reach for four miles). Regent Street is 80 feet broad and Queen Victoria Street 75 feet. We may ask ourselves how much of the difference in the impressions that these streets make is due to difference of width. As far as appearance goes, the architectural termini and the relative length are always stronger factors. The width demanded by the traffic alone is not, also, to be determined by the traffic's mass. The grade and the speed at which the travel moves must be carefully considered in interpreting the requirements of its volume.

There is, too, something to be said about the choice of the local improvements that are to be undertaken for bettering the urban conditions. There should be remembrance that it is the municipal, rather than the local, condition which it is desired to improve. The committee of the London county council which has this matter in charge states that in preparing its annual recommendations to the council, it "gives the fullest consideration to the requirements of each district and accordingly selects, from all parts of London, such improvements as are most urgently needed and which will be of the greatest advantage to the general through travel." This states the rule precisely.

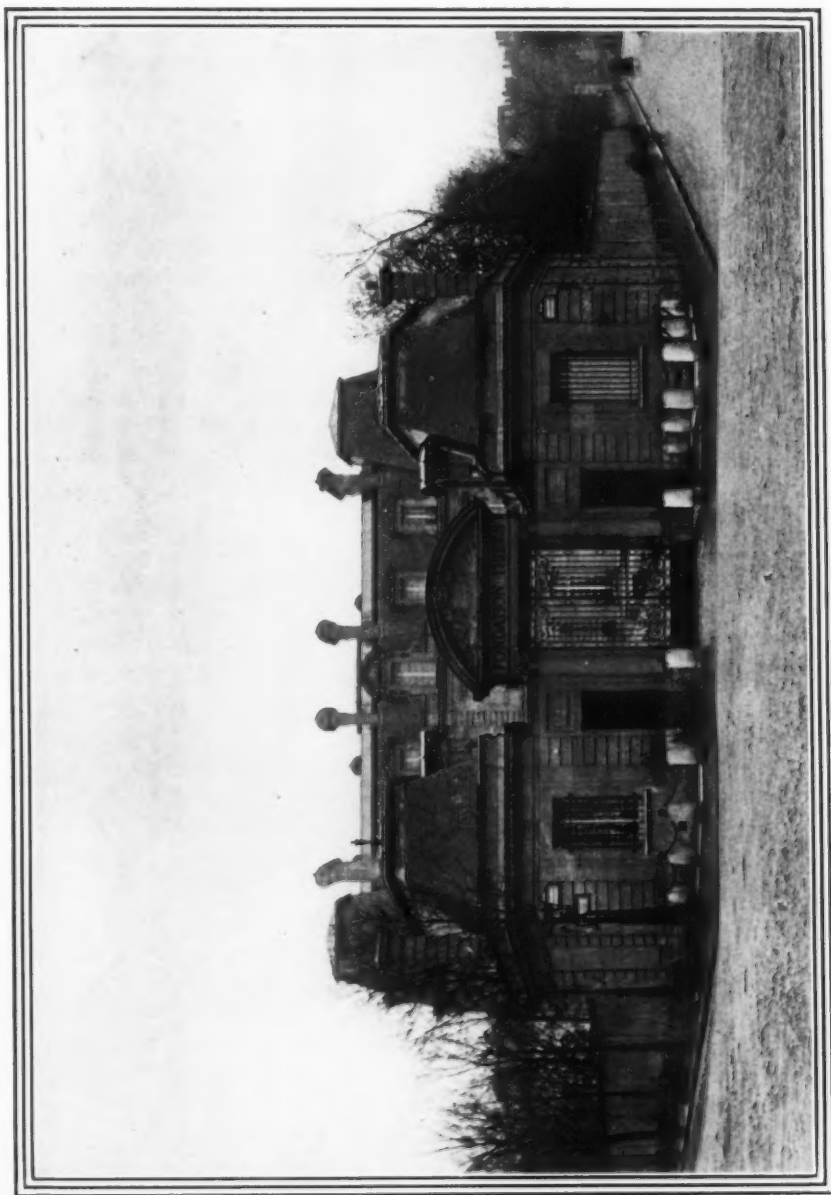
Now, as to securing the radical street changes that may be required, there are in general five methods of procedure: First, the constructing authority may acquire only those properties the whole or portions of which are actually needed for the new or widened street. This is the method usually adopted by the London county

council. Second, there may be acquired more land than is actually needed for the improvement, with a view to the gaining of valuable building sites. This plan is suggested in the quoted decree for the improvement of Vienna. Third, property over a large area through which the improvement passes may be acquired with a view to abolishing a slum district for instance. Examples of this are found in some of the provincial cities of Great Britain, and where large land improvement companies have operated. Fourth, the acquisition of only that property which is to be added to the public way and the levying of an improvement charge upon the adjacent lands. This is a familiar American method. Fifth, a modification of the third scheme to the extent that the acquirements are confined to freehold and long leasehold interests, the short leaseholds being allowed to run out. When the acquirements exceed the needs of the new or widened street itself, there may be important recoupments by the sale of the sites made so much more valuable through the improvements. When the acquirements are not so considerable as to constitute good sites, or when no land is acquired beyond that needed for the street itself, which is pushed ruthlessly through, regardless of the cutting of lots, there may be left along its edges building sites so meagre and fragmentary as to be comparatively worthless. In such case the improvement instead of affording a handsome thoroughfare results only in a dismal collection of the backs of buildings and of patches of vacant land. Such an outcome must be foreseen and guarded against in making the new street.

There is one other consideration to influence sometimes the location of new business thoroughfares, or to add to the estimate of their value. It has been found that often there is no better way to redeem a slum district than by cutting into it a great highway that will be filled with the through travel of a city's industry. Like a stream of pure water cleansing what it touches this tide of traffic, pulsing with the joyousness of the city's life of toil and purpose, when flowing through an idle or suffering district wakes it to larger interests and higher purpose. We have, too, this thing to remember, and it is the especial text of municipal æsthetics. Until there is a good street plan modern civic art can come to little. A Greek sculptor charged his pupil with having richly ornamented a statue because he "knew not how to make it beautiful." Beauty is dependent on a fineness of line, a chastity of form, the lack of which can be atoned for by no ornament that is superimposed, by no added decoration. And this is no more true in sculpture than in the street plan, which is the skeleton of the city, the framework of the structure in the highest and most complex of all the arts—the art of noble city building.

Charles Mulford Robinson.

The foregoing article is a chapter from Mr. Robinson's book on "Civic Æsthetics," which will be published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, this spring. Mr. Robinson is recognized as the leading authority on civic art.



THE THIERS INSTITUTE; ENTRANCE FROM THE STREET.

Architect, M. Aldroff.

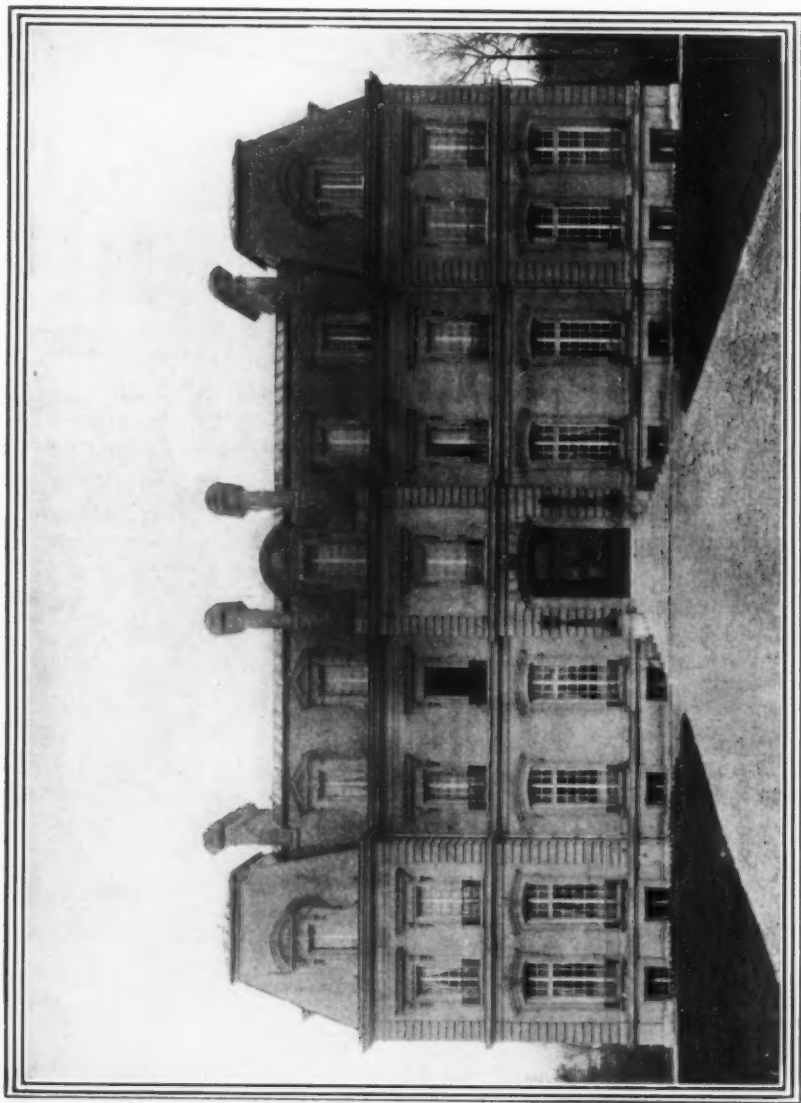
/ THE THIERS INSTITUTE.

IN one of the wealthiest parts of Paris, quite near to the Bois de Boulogne, people are often to be seen gazing with curiosity at a very handsome looking building, the architecture of which is in the severe style of the Louis XIV epoch. The building is not mentioned in any guide book, worthy though it certainly is of attention. There is an inscription over the entrance in gold letters: FONDATION THIERS.

In the United States the country *par excellence* of colossal fortunes, men are often perplexed to know what to do with their money. Philanthropists, who have the interest of their country at heart, could not do better than establish in America an institution on the same lines as the Thiers Institute. Before describing this institution and giving details with regard to its construction, it will perhaps be as well to explain the idea of its founder.

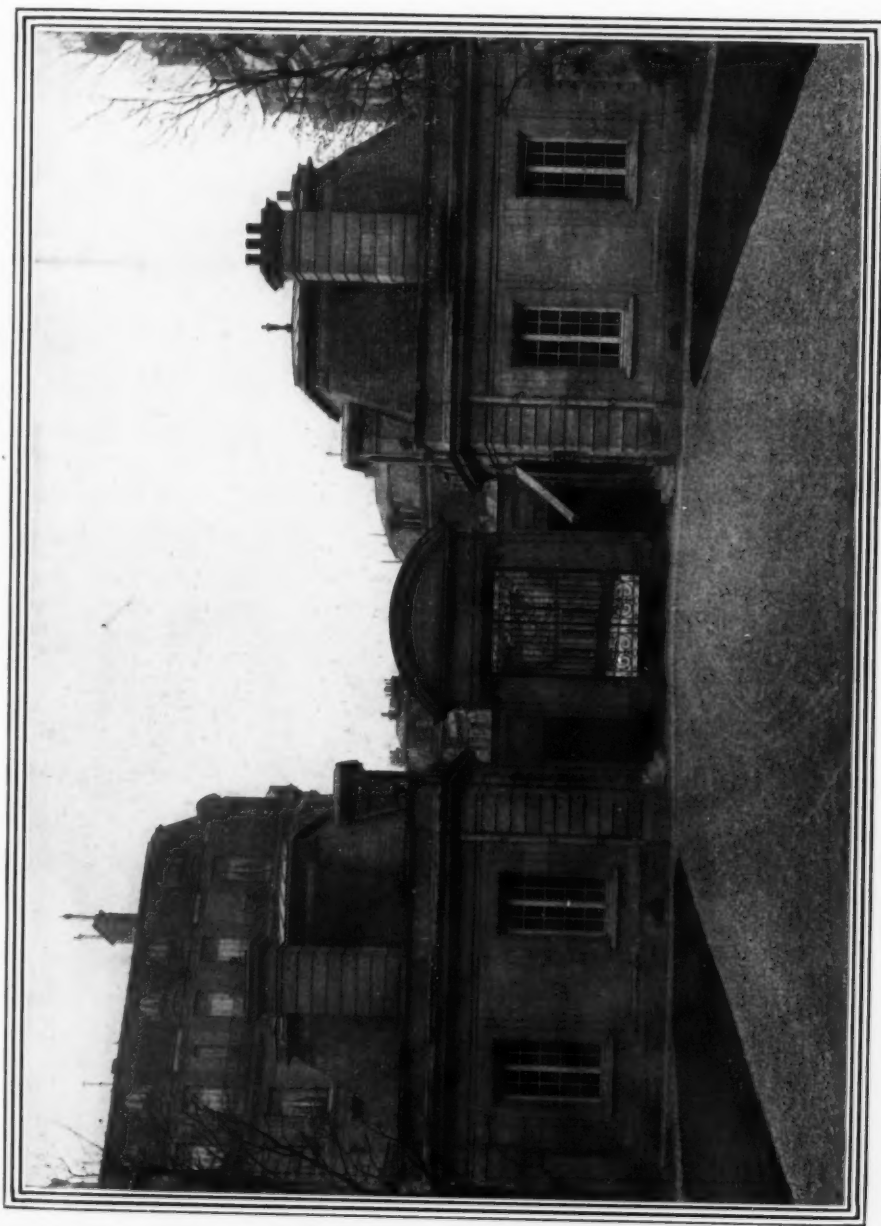
M. Thiers, the celebrated French statesman and historian, began life in humble circumstances, and when a student he, like many of his comrades, suffered all kinds of privations, and was sometimes compelled to eat dry bread in order to buy the books which were necessary for his work. Later on, when he had become minister, and was a celebrated writer, he remembered his early struggles with poverty, and he frequently thought out plans for aiding young men, who were in need of the pecuniary aid which is indispensable to all who devote themselves to the study of history, science or geography. He expressed to his wife his desire to found a kind of home for young men without means, where they could pursue their scientific studies in absolute moral tranquility.

M. Thiers died before carrying out his generous idea; but his widow, on making her will, left her sister, Mademoiselle Dosne, residuary legatee on condition that she should found at her death the home which had been the dream of the great statesman. Very generously Mademoiselle Dosne decided to carry out during her lifetime the wishes of her sister and brother-in-law. By giving up her share of the heritage she was able to devote several millions of francs to the building and endowment of the Thiers Institute; and she herself gave the land, which measured 5,200 metres, and which was valued at 1,500,000 francs. With the assistance of some of the most experienced and capable men, such as Mignet, Jules Simon, Gérard, Barthélemy and Saint Hilaire, Mademoiselle Dosne proceeded to consider on what lines the new institution should be carried on. It was decided that a comfortable home should be made for fifteen young men under the age of twenty-six, who should be chosen among the doctors of law or licentiates of any of the



THIERS INSTITUTE; MAIN FAÇADE.

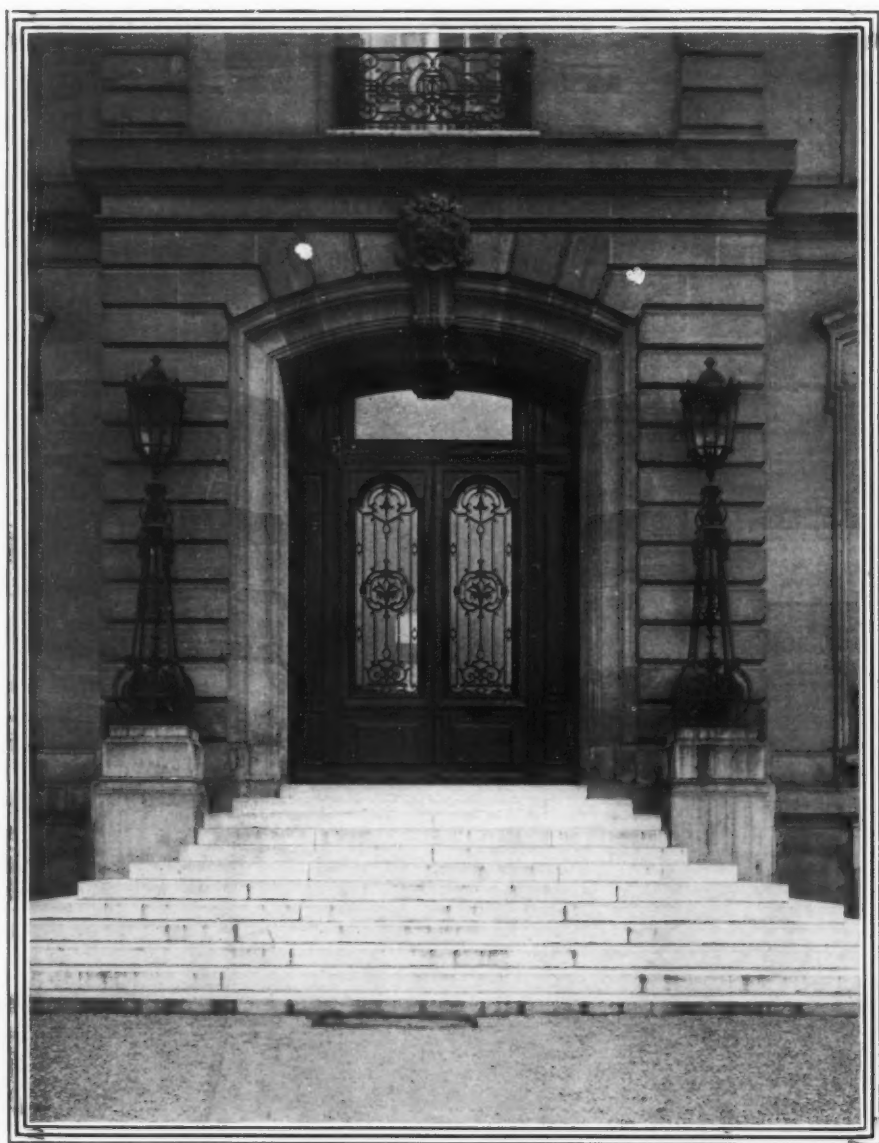
Architect, M. Aldroff.



THIERS INSTITUTE.

The pavilions on either side of the court; view from the interior.

Architect, M. Aldroff.



THIERS INSTITUTE; ENTRANCE GATE.

Architect, M. Aldroff.

Faculties, and who were preparing for their degrees. These young men should take up their abode at the Thiers Institute for a period of three years. They should have rooms, board, fire, light, twelve hundred francs a year for their personal expenses, and on leaving a sum of eighteen hundred francs. With such advantages these young men would be able to give themselves up entirely, during the three years of their sojourn in this comfortable home, to the study of history, geography, letters, Greek, Latin and Roman philology, law, mathematics and the abstract sciences.

These fifteen boarders form intellectually an *élite* society. They are left absolutely free to work in their own way, with no control whatever; and as a matter of fact they may be considered as an Academy of *savants* of the future—a Paris Academy which, by its statutes, is similar to the Rome Academy, founded for the students of the Beaux Arts—an institution enabling young artists to consecrate themselves entirely to their art for a given period.

At the entrance to the Thiers Institute are gates of wrought iron with stone pillars on each side. The courtyard is gay with flowers. On the left of the gate is the gate-keeper's lodge, and on the right a music room. The house itself is of three stories and built entirely of freestone. The first story, built, on a basement of 1 metre 80, is 6 metres high, the second story, is 5 metres 7, and the third 5 metres 50. This top story forms, at the same time, the roofing of the building, which is of iron covered with slate, zinc and lead. From the ground to the top of the building is 22 metres 37, the width of the façade is 40 metres 30 and the depth of the construction 24 metres 10. A flight of twelve steps leads to the hall door, which is of wrought iron and carved oak, the hall is paved with colored marble and decorated with ornamental carvings. Three doors open on to the hall. The one on the left leads to the suite of rooms occupied by the principal, that on the right to the steward's department and the reception room, while the middle door leads into a hall.

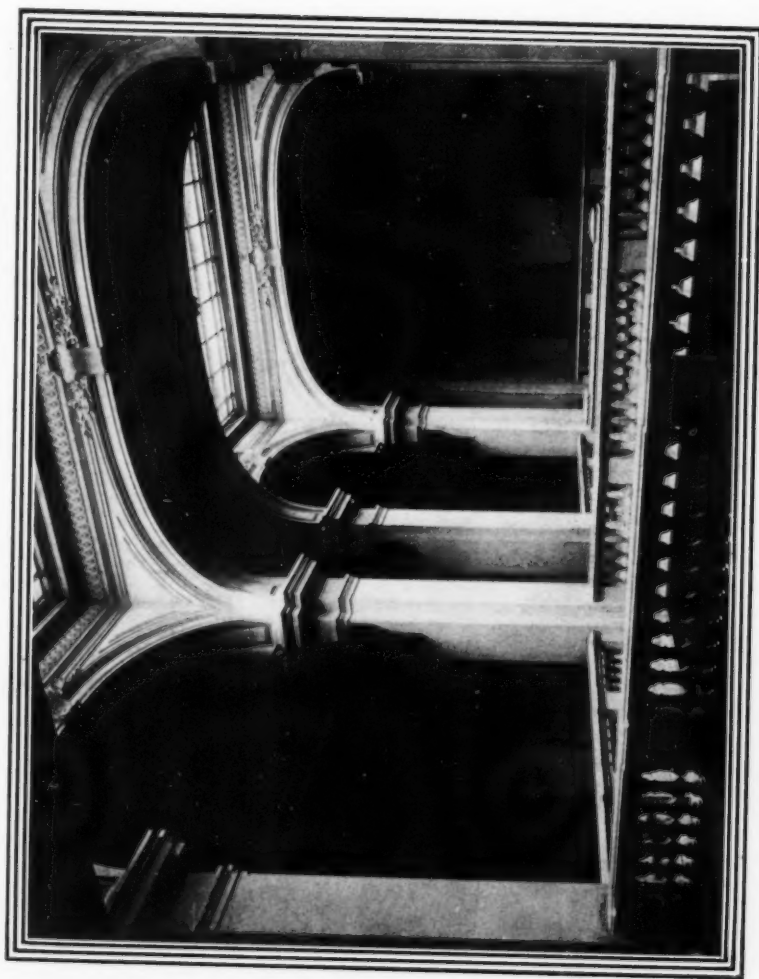
The Principal, M. Brontroux, a distinguished savant, who kindly opened his house to the ARCHITECTURAL RECORD, has a handsome suite of rooms 5 m. 60 high. The three stories of the fore part of the building on the left are at his disposal. The reception room and the librarian's office, occupied to-day by M. de Veran, are not remarkable in any way, but the hall which precedes the staircase, is worthy of attention. This hall opens on to the three stories, and is 10 metres by 6 m. 50 and 14 m. 25 in height, and has large panes of glass at the top. It is divided from the first story in three sections of equal size, separated by stone pillars, and on one side there is a staircase of stone and marble which is very imposing.

On the first story is a stone balustrade going round the three



THIERS INSTITUTE; THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Architect, M. Aldroff.



THIERS INSTITUTE; GALLERY ON THE FIRST FLOOR.

Architect, M. Aldroff.

sections of the hall, whilst on the second story there is a balcony of wrought iron. Mouldings, scroll work and palms ornament the frontals of the doors and the arches which support the panes of glass.

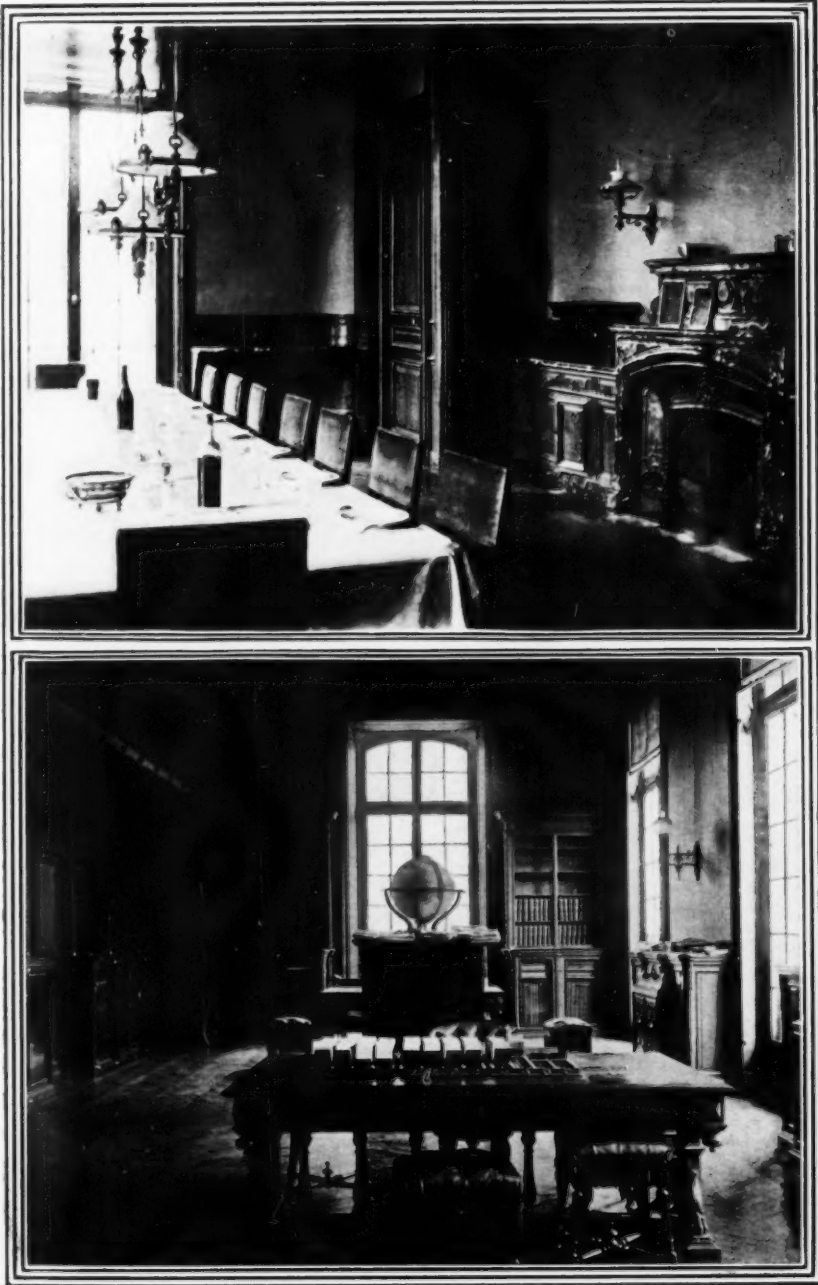
The library of the Thiers Institute is 13 m. 70 by 6 m. 75, and is entirely wainscoted with oak, the ceiling forming wide ledges in relief. This wainscoting cost 40,000 francs, and was formerly in M. Thiers' study, as well as the furniture of the library and the 12,000 volumes which Mademoiselle Dosne placed at the service of these students. Some of the volumes are first editions or rare books of great value.

Next to the library is the council room, which is 10 metres by 11. The members of the various learned academies who are entrusted with the moral direction of the Thiers Institute meet here. This room opens on one side on to the garden and on the other is a huge mantel shelf of red sculptured marble, decorated with gilded bronze carving framing a white marble plaque, on which are engraved the names of the founders and the history of the institution. On the left of the mantelpiece is a portrait of Madame Thiers and on the right one of M. Thiers by Léon Bonnat.

Next to the council room are the smoking room and the refectory, the latter decorated with oak wainscoting. At a long, wide table the fifteen boarders lunch at twelve o'clock and dine at seven. For these meals the sum of 23,000 francs a year is set aside. The total budget of the Foundation is 120,000 francs, 20,000 francs of which are paid to the president. Two women and five men servants are employed. The kitchens are supplied with everything necessary and the heating apparatus of the house is all that could be desired.

There are fifteen bedrooms for the students opening on the gallery round the hall of the two upper stories. These rooms are 5 metres by 4 and 4 metres high, with a large dressing room leading out of each. They are furnished comfortably, and each boarder reigns supreme in his own room. He has a table there, and is at liberty to work at all hours and may take the library books to his bedroom. Although they are all perfectly free to go out whenever they choose it has rarely happened that the students have taken unfair advantage of the liberty allowed them.

They have in the house a billiard table, a fencing room, baths, etc., so that altogether it is a veritable Paradise for those students who had been accustomed to the hard beds of colleges or the authoritative discipline of provincial schools. This sanctuary for work, where, during three years the Thiers students are free from all material care and anxiety, enables them to become experienced savants, conscientious historians and men whose knowledge will be of benefit to future generations.



THIERS INSTITUTE; THE REFECTORY AND THE LIBRARY.

Architect, M. Aldroff.

One million fifty-six thousand francs for the building (of which 379,651 francs for the house itself and 70,000 francs for the gate-keeper's lodge and music room), 1,500,000 for the ground, 3,800,000 francs for endowment—such is the balance sheet of the Thiers Foundation, which was instituted in 1890, built in two years by M. Aldroff, recognized by the government as an institution of public utility in 1893, and which at present is considered as a private academy unique in the world, not only because of its material luxury, but on account of the admirable planning of all its arrangements.

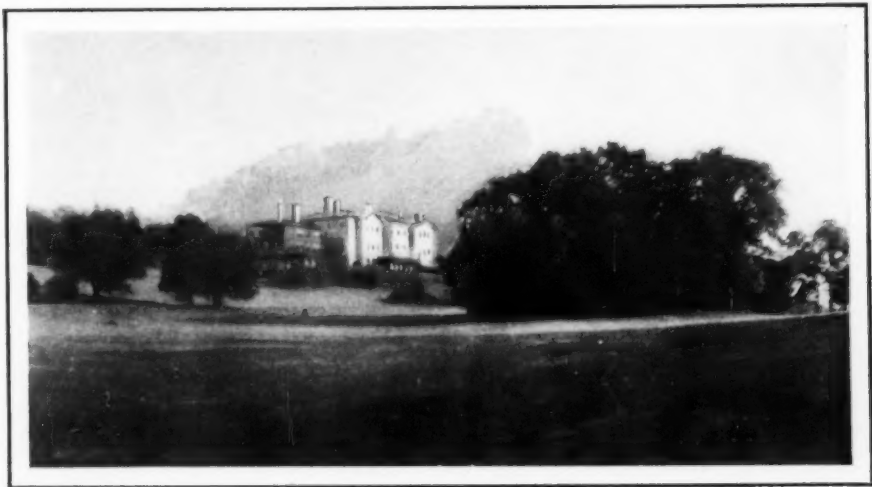
Pierre Calmettes,

Officer of Public Instructions.

The writer of this article on the Thiers Foundation is M. Calmettes, the distinguished author and artist. M. Calmettes' book on "Choiseul and Voltaire" is a valuable historical study. His contributions on historical subjects to the "Revue des Deux Mondes" and the "Revue Hebdomadaire" are well known. M. Calmettes is a contributor to most of the French reviews and is also the author of a book entitled "Le travail de nos ouvriers modernes d'art et d'industrie."



THIERS INSTITUTE, GRAND STAIRWAY.



INFORMAL OUTDOOR ART.

Its Value to Architecture.

IT is hardly necessary to point out that the finest work of architecture may gain greatly from its surroundings, and that the worst may be greatly mitigated by them. This being once understood, it is but a step for the architect to attempt to place his structure amid advantageous surroundings. The next step would be the attempt to adapt the surroundings to the structure, and the final, and far more distant step to the reduction of the choice of surroundings to a system; that is, to the making of it into an art; or, rather, to the discovery of this art, for an art is a thing of discovery, not invention. Architecture flourished mightily for 8,000 years, more or less, before it was perceived that this art of making beautiful surroundings was worth seeking, and explorers went in search of it. When it was discovered, it was called by the makeshift name of landscape gardening; and in this name have many vain and foolish things been done, as they have in the name of architecture, and anything else that can be flattered by imitation or caricature. The term is not here applied to the formal gardening of geometry, for this is, in a sense, part of the architecture; but to whatever is beyond, provided it is constructed or spared with any conscious attempt to produce an artistic result.

The oldest type of garden was invented by architects and is, in effect, an unroofed and perhaps unwalled extension of the house—a scheme of one or more outdoor apartments, in which the carpet is of turf and the furniture and perhaps the walls themselves of trees,

flowers or bushes, or as often the work of the carpenter or stonecutter, statuary, vases, steps and the like. Its feeling and principles of design do not differ from those of the building which it amplifies and adorns. From its very nature, its cost of construction and maintenance, its limits are soon reached. In fact, it usually does not appear at all, and sometimes cannot appear logically.

If the building is to receive a setting of more land than it actually covers, the setting may have one of two characters; it may be the architectural setting of axes and angles, or it may be one of a na-



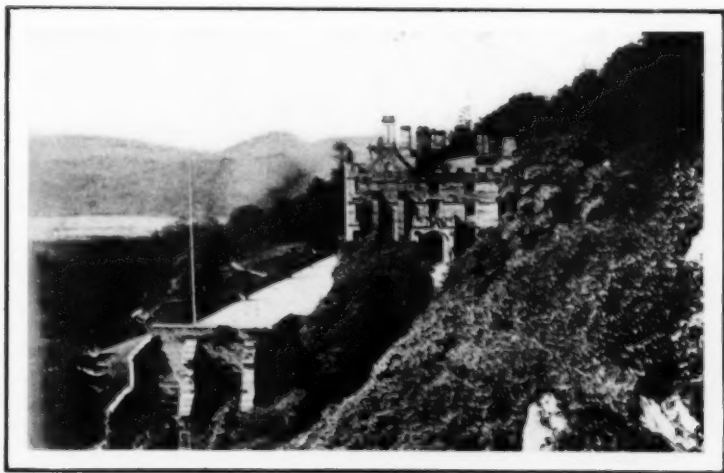
A lawn of beautiful contours and foliage frame, making an informal vista closed by the house. The latter is too much concealed and the whole picture somewhat marred by the weeping maple tree, which should have been further to the right.

ture not opposed to, but different from it, not conflicting, but harmonizing with the rigid lines of architecture by reason of its very contrast with them. The lines and surfaces of architecture and of its corollary formal gardening, are finite and positive, limited in fact and feeling by other unvarying lines and surfaces.

When we discard the right line, the angle and the circle for the varying curve, limited in fact but unlimited in feeling, we obtain a result radically different in construction and sentiment; we come into a region where rules are more rare, and exceptions more com-

mon, where the painter and the sculptor and the musician find principles for their guidance; and if our materials are not colors or marble or notes, but lines and surfaces of ground such as nature makes and suggests, masses and hues of foliage and flowers irregularly disposed and the like, our art is called, for want of a better name, natural or informal gardening. It is an art of varying lines, while architecture is an art of lines unvarying and limited.

The use of the adjective "natural" and of the noun "gardening" is unfortunate in both cases. A garden is a thing with definite bounds, a collection of flowers or foliage, or both, mainly for their own sake; an area treated naturally, may be apparently unlimited, and may have no flowers in it at all. A "natural" garden is assumed to be an imitation of nature, whereas it is usually nothing of



The building and its necessary terraces all set in foliage and rocks. The architect wisely left off his formal treatment as soon as he could.

Photo by Mr. J. Woodward Manning.

the kind. It may be an imitation, and when the work of the artist really seems to be that of nature, it is "natural" gardening; when it does not, and is yet informal, it becomes naturalistic.

This kind of work imitates nature only in her general principles; its exponents, like those of landscape painting, have seen that open and closed spaces, turf and foliage and rocks and buildings and so on, can be disposed to produce coherent and artistic effects. So they dispose their materials, all of which may be frankly artificial, to produce effects analogous to them. But they are not copies of nature, and only imitations in the sense that every building is an imitation of some type that has preceded it. The ordinary materials themselves of the naturalistic gardener, lawn surfaces and exotic trees and bushes, are as plainly artificial as bricks and mortar.

These principles can apply to the decoration of a 25-foot lot or the arranging of a city park.

It is this art of informal gardening whose principles are commonly applied, more or less imperfectly, to the decoration of the ground about suburban or country houses. Its usual materials are a smooth lawn, some bushes, too often of a speckled or yellow or red-leaved kind, and perhaps flower beds, vases or other irrelevant



Commonplace carpentry mollified and idealized by foliage and flowers. A real garden setting.

Photo by Mr. J. Woodward Manning.

objects. The lines of the lawn are apt to be clumsy and the disposal of the objects referred to more or less promiscuous, resulting in a disordered neatness, and a careful indecision that is unsatisfactory, but instructive enough. It is instructive through the negativeness of its effect showing how beautiful parts can be put together to make an unmeaning whole. The informal gardener is spared one of the pitfalls of the architect, who has to invent not only his de-

sign, but his details. But the gardener's detail of flowers and foliage is beautiful in itself, and can be spoiled only by bad placing. This wealth and beauty of material is really one of the snares of the informal gardener, who is apt to set out plants for their own sake, and forget the design in superfluity of detail.

If any one observes many suburban and country homes with an inquiring eye, he is bound to see one or more which make, with their accompaniment of turf and foliage, a picture more or less complete, harmonious and artistic; in which the house without its climbers and shrubbery would look forlorn and naked, as may be seen clearly enough in winter. These materials, the masses of foli-

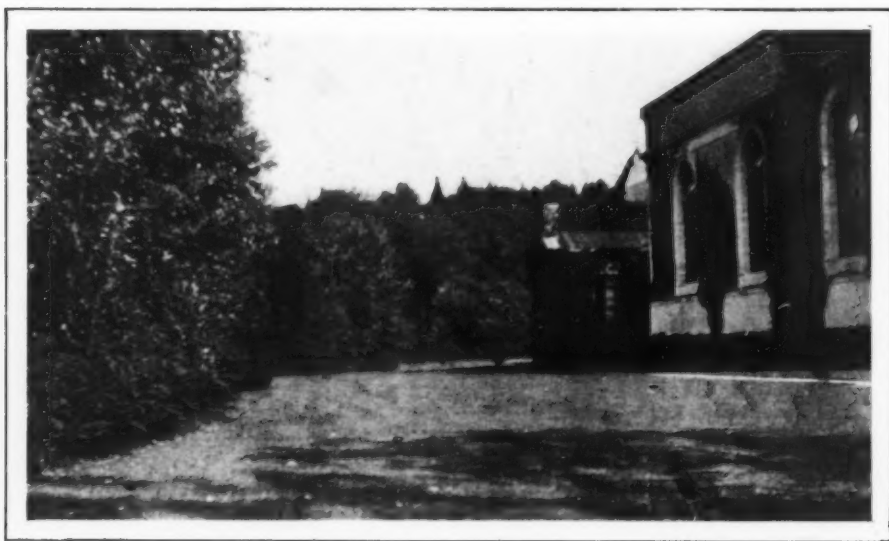


A house on a rocky knoll. An opportunity for a simple and apparently obvious effect of lawn and foliage, often found, but seldom taken advantage of.

age and surfaces of turf are arranged with no symmetry, yet with an order that approximates perfection; they disregard axes and formality, and, in fact, are inconsistent with them; yet they are in no way inconsistent with the axes and regularity of the building, but furnish a frame for them harmonious in its very contrast. If the scheme should be analyzed, the arrangement will be found about as definable as that of a group of Murillo or a landscape of Turner, from which it does not differ in kind though it may in degree.

Now this kind of setting for a building, which is always rational and often the only one practicable, is the product of an art of great possibilities, as its occasional works of all degrees of success prove.

That it is a vital and necessary art is shown by the innumerable attempts to realize it, and that it is a difficult one is shown by the innumerable failures. That it is a real art, a thing of instinct and sentiment is proved by its fitness and beauty when it finds adequate expression; it seems to belong there. That the training of other arts and crafts is not sufficient for its adequate expression is shown by the almost endless wealth of material of trees and plants alone which its professor must intimately know, and in terms of which he must learn to think. An idea of the varied knowledge required may be gained by reading the programme of the four years' course in landscape architecture at the Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard University.



Another simple but admirable composition of architecture, vines, flat lawn and foliage; much more beautiful in reality than in the picture. Many "opportunities" are discreetly lost here.

Unfortunately, a scheme of this kind, when first executed, shows, excepting to the experienced eye, so little token of its future development, that there is little wonder that those who have not learned to interpret it see no "design" in it. Trees and bushes which will some day grow as high and wide as the house or one's head, which will conceal the distance and transform the foreground, look when first planted, and for years after, little better than casual and forlorn bundles of sticks. When they have had time to grow and assert themselves, they will become stately and predominant, and the scheme will come together like the pieces of a puzzle. If it were not for this unhappy procrastination of nature, if a plan could be realized as soon as the workmen had gone, everybody who could af-

ford it would have his grounds, large or small, arranged by an artist as naturally as he does his house.

Partly because of this unavoidable delay, and partly because of the abounding bad examples of its use, informal gardening has found enemies, some of them not without wit and persistence in assailing it. They are all advocates of formal gardening, which they appear to consider the only rational way of treating outdoor surfaces worthy of the consideration of an artist, an opinion to which they have a perfect right. But, unhappily, they all attempt to raise



House and lawn, rocks and foliage. Apparently easy to make, but really very easy to mar. A logical use of a real garden to frame the architecture.

their own pet formality on the ruins of informality. They appear to assume that the two systems are hostile, and that if one is right, the other must be wrong. They are not hostile, but merely different. They may be, and very often are, allies, mutually indispensable, complementary to each other. A more serious error is made by the enemies of informal gardening when they proceed to argument and justification; they pick out the mistakes and absurdities that can be found almost anywhere committed in the name of informal gardening, state them as its essential principles, and proceed to ridicule them. Most of the charges against informal gar-

done have been summed up by Reginald Blomfield, who says "Deception is a primary object of the natural gardener. Thus, to get variety, and deceive the eye into supposing that the garden is larger than it really is, paths are made to wind about in all directions and the lawns are not to be left in broad expanse, but dotted about with pampas grass, foreign shrubs, or anything else that will break up the surface." We are every now and then reminded of the somewhat threadbare story of the Frenchman who said that all that was necessary to do to make a natural garden was to make your gardener drunk and follow his footsteps. Others tell us that nothing is more tame and insipid than a large lawn; that there is no



Illustrating the common faults of the suburban lot. A big bunch of cannas in the middle of the lawn (the worst place for a bad thing) and miscellaneous trees and bushes scattered aimlessly.

"design" in the informal style, and that its ultimate object is to reproduce the appearance of nature; and so on.

The best reply to such statements is not merely that they are not true, but that they actually contradict the principles of the informal style, which are primarily those of common sense and repose. It is manifestly inconsistent with common sense that a path should wind for the sake of winding, or that it should take any direction plainly inconvenient. As a matter of fact, roads and paths generally do wind to a greater or less extent in the informal style because they are adapted to the contour of the ground and becomes curved for the sake of a moderate grade and ease of construction, or to

avoid defacing a lawn, or to get grace of line, or to lead past objects of interest or the like. To litter an open space with casual and impertinent objects, whether bushes or not, is plainly destructive of repose, and, in fact, of artistic effect in general. As a matter of fact, one of the salient features of the informal style is the unbroken lawn, large or small, interesting and various from its lights and shadows and contours and its setting of foliage. It is found that where curves are indefinite and masses irregular, rectilinear boundaries pain the eye and interrupt the view; so fences are sometimes suppressed whereby the neighbor's land appears to be part of one's own. The insipidity and tameness of a large lawn can be



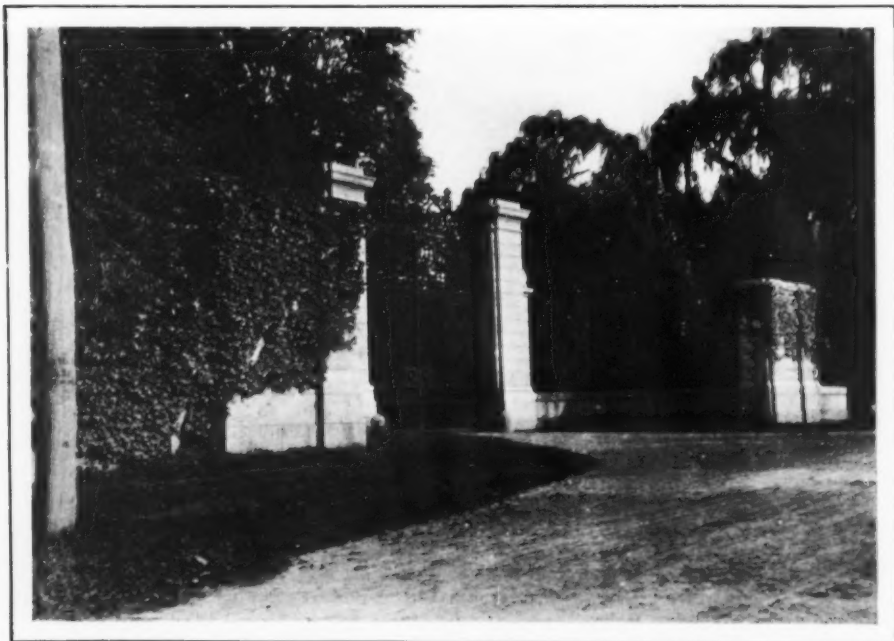
A too uncommon use of a real and rational informal garden to set off a large building. The motives were probably the group of trees and the steep grades, both of them easier and less costly to reconcile with an informal than with a formal scheme.

Photo by Mr. J. Woodward Manning.

judged by any one who will go no further afield than Central, Prospect or Morningside Parks, and watch the play of light and shade on the suave and vital lines of the great foliage-framed expanses of turf. If these are tame, then so is the Duomo of Florence, and the vaster dome of the sky.

The worker in the informal style starts with the intention of making an artistic picture; if he does not succeed, he is probably no artist, but it proves nothing against the art he professes to practice. It would be as reasonable to appraise the art of Palladio and Richardson on the testimony of the tin cornices of a Harlem street, or the latest novelty in bathing pavilion. Those who would applaud

or condemn informal gardening should do so in the light of the outdoor pictures they can see in all directions if they care to look for them among suburban homes and large parks, and all kinds of outdoor composition between them. That they usually appear so simple and obvious when once made, is no proof that there was no skill and talent in the making of them; to uninitiated folk the Parthenon and the vanished Campanile of Venice appear easy enough to invent; there cannot have been any great talent needed to place those few and simple lines in that order. That they are not con-



A mass of trees, probably designed, possibly not, but serving to show that foliage is the most effective background to architecture.

structed on axes and figures of plane geometry is no proof of want of "design;" they show plainly enough, a deliberate and definite intention to produce an artistic result, which is surely the essence of design.

This is not written in any desire to disparage formal gardening, but to assert and defend its informal complement and ally. Formal gardening has its own peculiar charm that nothing else can replace. But it almost always is, and usually must be succeeded and supplemented by informality. There is no conflict between the two styles, but neither is good and right except in the right place, and no one should undertake to work in either who has

not done his best to understand both; for their value is interdependent and reactionary, and often depends largely on their proper balance and mutual relations.

Informal or natural, or naturalistic gardening then, like any other art, has a right to be judged by its best, not its worst examples. When one comes across a coherent and beautiful scene that is not architectural, yet is wholly or partly artificial, this is informal gardening, and by its artistic result demonstrates the hand of the



Autumn leaves. The possibilities of a small and flat and commonplace suburban lot.

artist. This art does not and cannot conflict with that of the architect of garden or of houses; for the two run on parallel lines which can never meet. Informal gardening has come to stay, because, like any other worthy and useful art, it is rooted in the nature of things and supplies a want. Those who decry and deny it should take care lest they advertise their own lack of perception. It must endure so long as the natural surface of the earth and its vegetable products are used as materials for a picture, however imperfect, and so long as they are used with due sympathy and right sentiment, the architect will have no more valuable ally, and architecture no more fit and beautiful accompaniment.

H. A. Caparn.



BUST OF LOIE FULLER.

LOÏE FULLER IN FRENCH SCULPTURE.

AT first sight, it may seem strange to see Miss Loïe Fuller spoken of in a magazine devoted to architecture and decorative art—a music-hall star taking the place of a skyscraper, a baroque house-front or a piece of furniture—yet we think it can be shown that the famous American dancer, who rose into notice a dozen years ago amidst the flood of light thrown by the then novel luminous projections, has had some influence upon the course of decorative art.

Everybody has seen Loïe Fuller, and knows the novelty which she introduced upon the stage. Instead of the traditional dancer in tights and short muslin skirt; instead of the familiar but ever-entertaining acrobatics—bounds, pirouettes, and so forth—in the even, steady glare of the footlights, there appeared one evening at the back of the darkened stage the indistinct form of a woman clothed in a confused mass of drapery. Suddenly a stream of light issued apparently from the woman herself, while around her the folds of gauze rose and fell in phosphorescent waves, which seemed to have assumed, one knew not how, a subtle materiality, taking the form of a golden drinking cup, a magnificent lily, or a huge glistening moth, wandering in the obscurity. But all the time, beneath the many shapes assumed by the drapery, one divined the tremulous figure of a young woman.

The amazing colorations of the flowing gauze under the light thrown through the prisms; the gracefulness of the motions; the beauty of the constantly changing lines of the drapery—these were the things which captivated us in the spectacle revealed by Loïe Fuller.

It was something that aroused the enthusiasm of artists; poets found it a fruitful theme, and people applied to Loïe Fuller the verses of Baudelaire, who might have had her in his mind when he wrote them:

*J'ai vu parfois, au fond, d'un théâtre banal,
Un être qui n' était que lumière, or et gaze.*

Painters tried to fix those luminous colors upon canvas, while sculptors reproduced in clay those novel forms. At the Exposition of 1900, Loïe Fuller was the subject of a number of works of art, exhibited in the vestibule of her theatre and bearing the signatures of the best known masters of our time, all having herself as their one theme.

We see already that the plastic arts and the name of Loïe Fuller can appear side by side in the title of an article. But there is more



LA LOÏE FULLER.

Sculptor, Théodore Rivière.



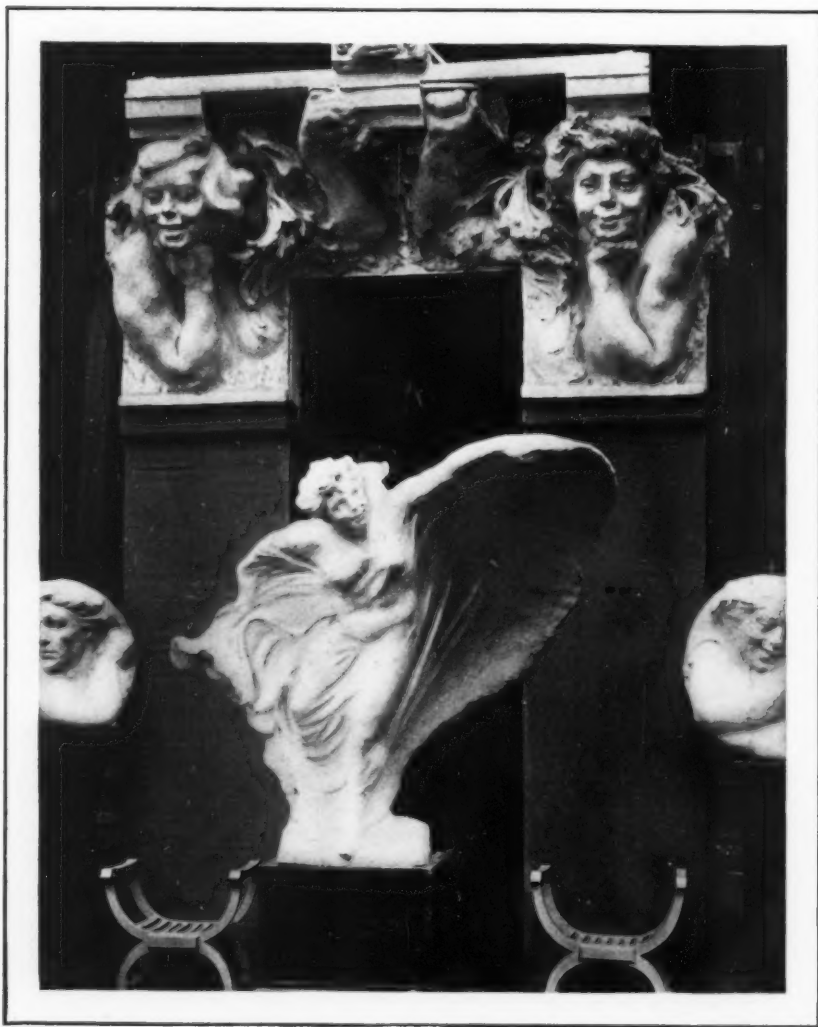
LOÏE FULLER, BY PIERRE ROCHE.



A PLASTER CAST OF ONE OF THE LATEST FIGURES OF LOIE FULLER.



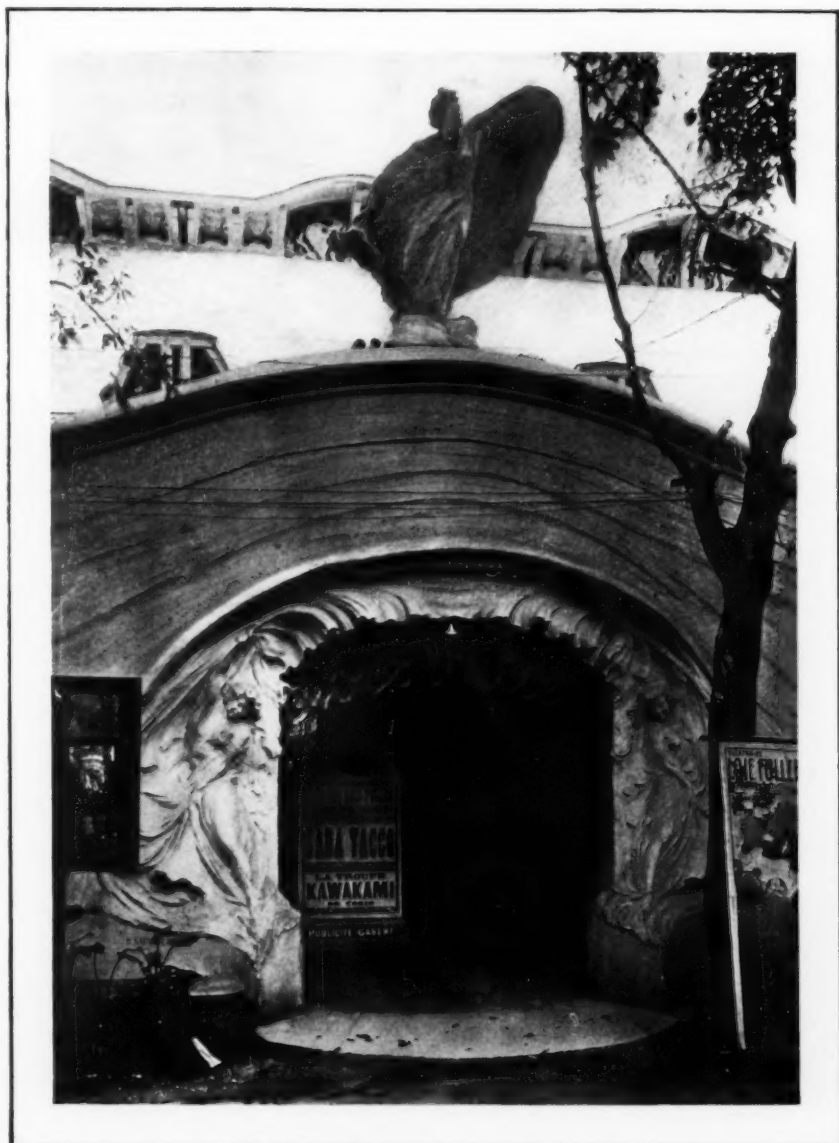
LOIE FULLER IN A CHARACTERISTIC POSE.



In the Salon of 1901.

FIGURE OF LOÏE FULLER.

Sculptor, Pierre Roche.



ENTRANCE TO LOÏE FULLER'S THEATRE.

Architect, M. Sauvage.

Sculptor, Pierre Roche.

than this. Loïe Fuller has not merely served as a model for artists. She has been, by her creation, a source of inspiration to the applied arts, and her influence is discernible in the revival of the decorative styles. The glassworking art owes her a great deal. Emile Gallé, the best master-glassworker in France, freely admits that he was led to seek new colorings for his glass by seeing the beautiful light effects invented by Loïe Fuller.

Miss Fuller has revealed to artists the magical effects produced by the traversing of substances by light and color. It is possible to trace the same influence in furniture decoration, and even in architecture.

Taken at the best, what effect has "art nouveau" had? That of relaxing the rigid lines of the decorative styles, which had got to exist entirely on formulæ and senseless imitations of the past. That there have been many exaggerations, many mistakes and many absurdities committed in the name of "art nouveau" nobody will deny. There is no need, however, to be alarmed at that. Only those who stand still can be sure of not tripping, but immobility is akin to death. Well, the taste shown for sinuous forms in furniture and nick-nacks undoubtedly has its analogue if not its origin in the skirt dance. This achievement is somewhat analagous to what Loïe Fuller has brought about in the art of dancing.

Look at the front of this little theatre, which is the work of M. Sauvage. We do not put it forward as a model piece of architecture. It is far from that. But it has a significance, and that suffices for us. We have seen forms kindred to these during recent years in articles of furniture, in bibelots, and in the buildings of a few architects of the new school. Now there is an evident co-relation between these architectural forms and those of the statue dominating the entrance here separately shown, and which was designed by M. Pierre Roche, just the same as we can trace, in the stained-glass windows and cupola, the influence of the color effects produced by the prisms of the celebrated *danscuse*.

Thus Miss Fuller's impression upon the world will not have been a transient one. What mark has been left by the great dancers of former generations—Taglioni, Fanny Essler and others? None at all. Something will, however, remain to recall the memory of Loïe Fuller. She has contributed towards the creation of a new style; she has come upon the scene at the right moment. It was worth while thus briefly to note in these pages, for the benefit of our descendants, how the name of an American *danscuse* is closely linked with the present revival in decorative styles.

Claude Anet.

"APPLEGARTH."

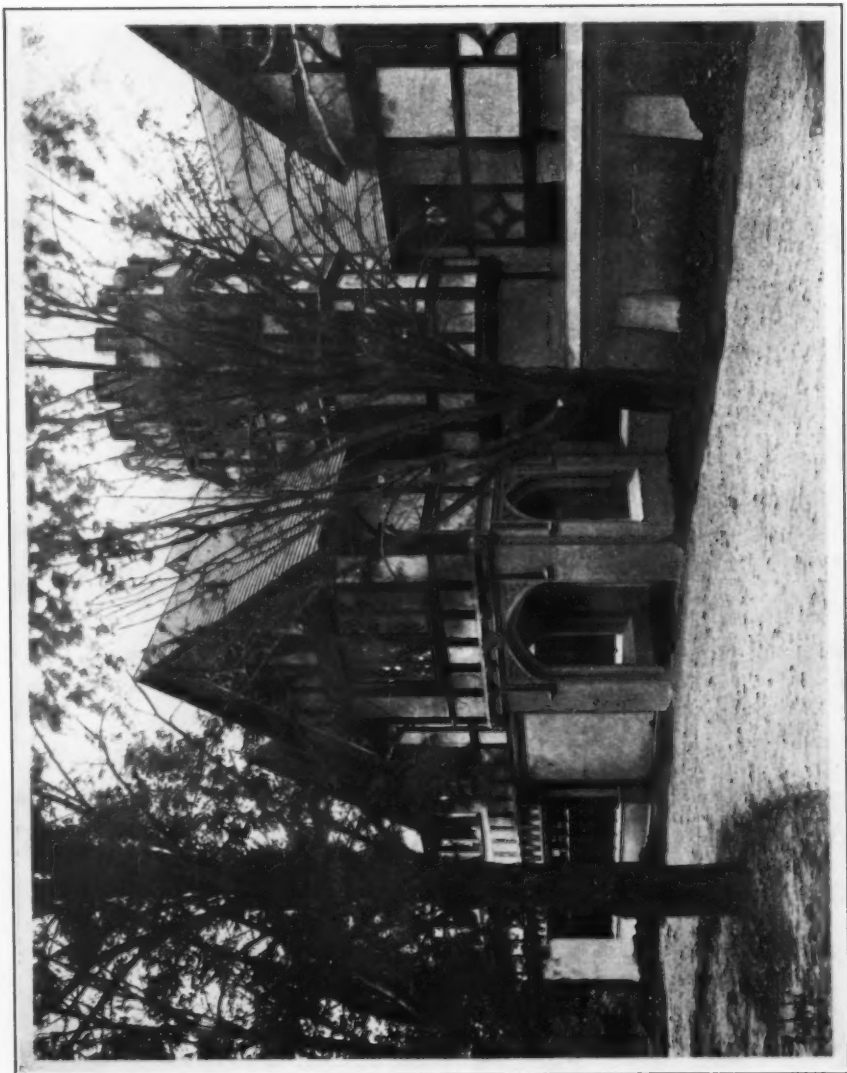
Residence of Chas. W. Wetmore, Esq., Center Island,
Oyster Bay, L. I.

THE house is very prettily situated on Center Island in an old orchard on the side of a high hill pitching toward what is known as the West Harbor of Oyster Bay and stands about two hundred feet from the water; hence the name of "Applegarth."

The design is Tudor carried out in stucco and half timber work. All the walls are carried up to the second floor level in brick with the exterior faces covered with stucco and the mouldings and ornaments done in the same material. Above the second floor level the building is frame, the exterior walls being done in stucco and half timber work. The house is divided into two parts, the main house and the kitchen and servants' wing. The kitchen yard is surrounded by a high brick and stucco wall having large gates for the admission of wagons. This wall also serves to subordinate and hide to some degree the kitchen wing. The gables of the exterior are ornamented with carved barge boards, carved brackets, and carved finials. The porch has a moulded and groined ceiling with foliated bosses, etc., and ornamental mouldings and spandrels.

The plan of the house, especially the first floor, is simple, gives the impression of spaciousness and has a general tone of quiet dignity and warmth. The entrance faces the road, which is about seventy-five feet from the house, and the dining-room, library and tea-room, and the rooms over them, face the southwest and overlook the Bay. The house is entered through a pointed Tudor doorway executed in limestone. The hall is square and opens to the left into the drawing-room, to the right into the kitchen wing, and on the side opposite to the entrance, it opens into the dining-room. To the right of the drawing-room are the library and tea-room. The floors of the drawing-room, library and tea-room are at a lower level than the floors of the hall and dining-room, thus giving greater height of ceiling.

The main hall is finished with wood ceiling paneled with heavy moulded beams and the walls are treated with pilasters and ornamental plaster tracery, arches and frieze. The stairway is finished with carved balusters and newels. The finishing wood of this room is birch. The walls and ceiling of drawing-room are finished in oak paneling with beams and pilasters and stained with a water stain. The mantel is of limestone and extends to the ceiling and is most elaborately carved with pilasters, panels—which contain crests—

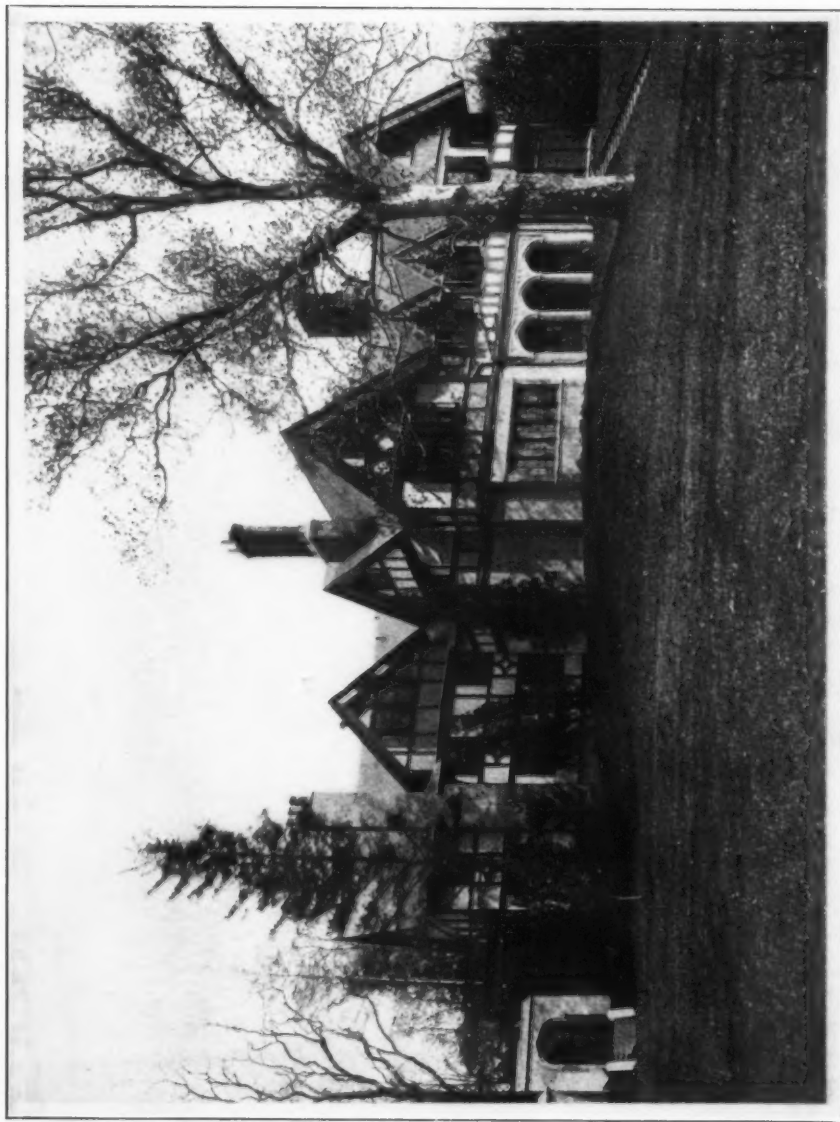


THE ENTRANCE TO "APPLEGARTH."

Residence of Charles W. Wetmore at Oyster Bay, L. I.
Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.
Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.



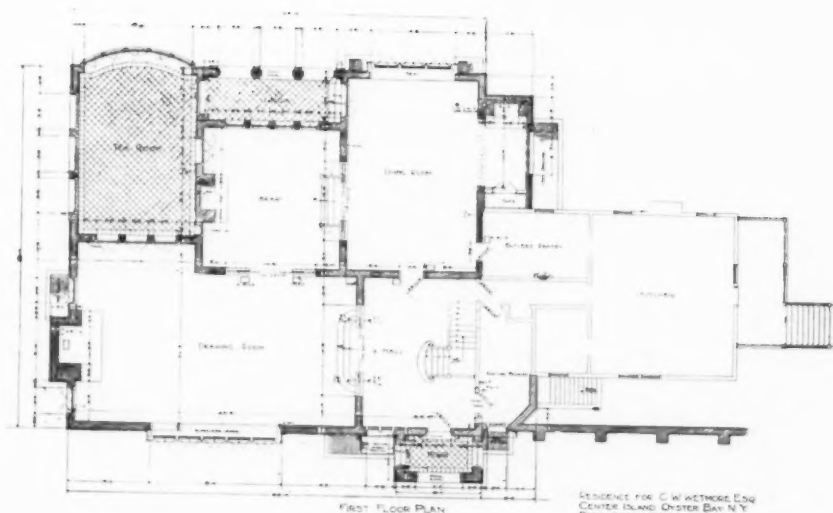
SIDE OF "APPLEGARTH," FACING THE WATER.
Residence of Charles W. Wetmore at Oyster Bay, L. I.
Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.
Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.



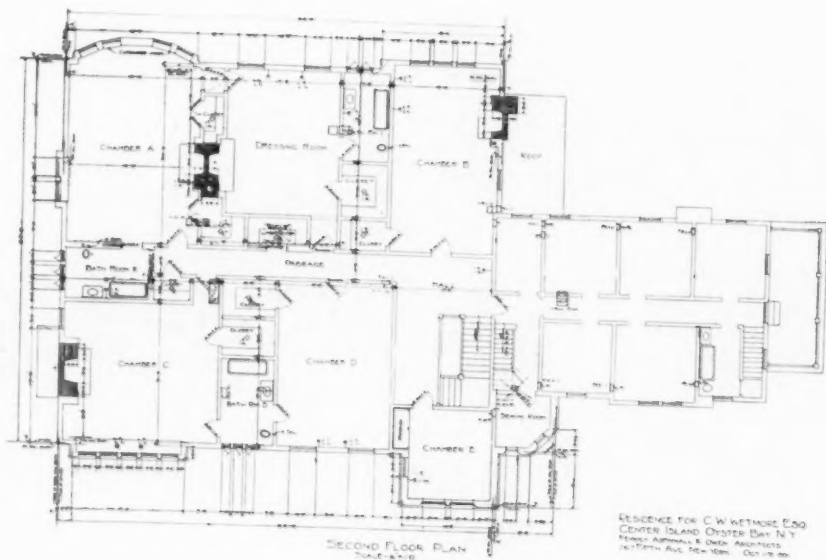
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Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.



RESIDENCE FOR C. W. WETMORE ESQ.
CENTER ISLAND, ONTARIO, CAN. N. Y.
ROBERT APPLEGARTH & SONS, ARCHT'S
367 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK. OCT. 1928



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THE ENTRANCE HALLWAY AT "APPLEGARTH."
Residence of Charles W. Wetmore at Oyster Bay, L. I. Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.
Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.



THE DRAWING-ROOM AT "APPLEGARTH."
Residence of Charles W. Welmore at Oyster Bay, L. I.

Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.

Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.

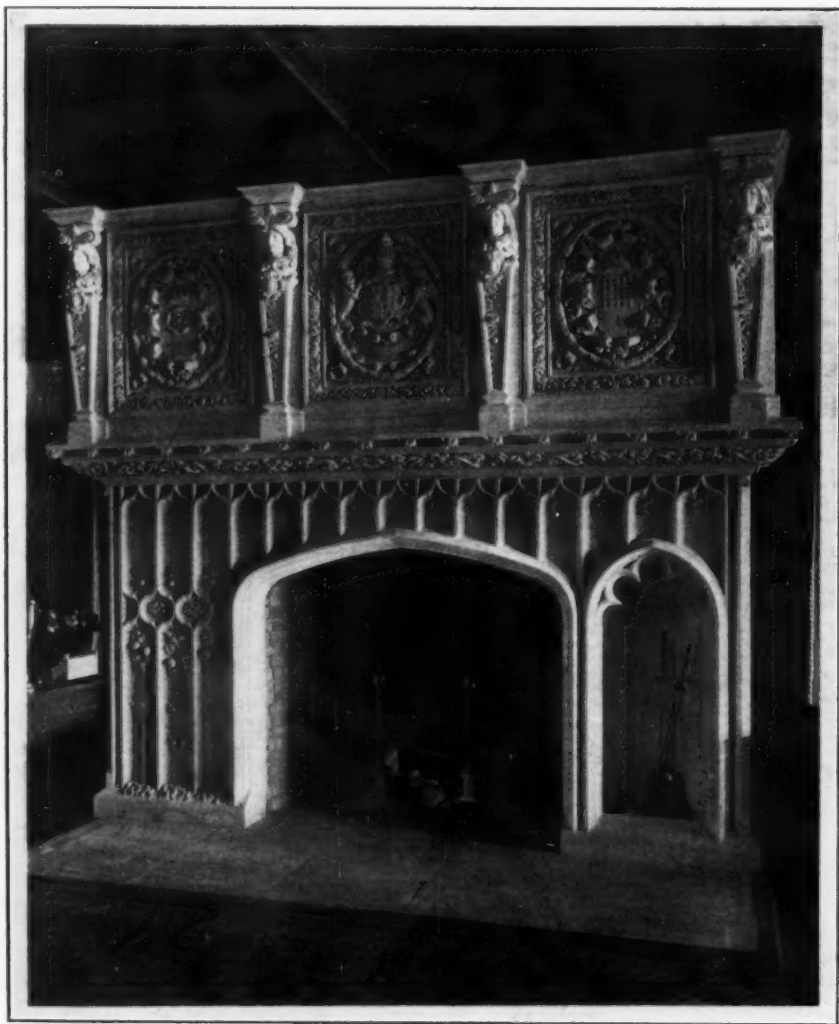


VIEW OF THE TEA-ROOM AT "APPLEGARTH," FROM THE DRAWING-ROOM.

Residence of Charles W. Wetmore at Oyster Bay, L. I.

Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.

Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.



MANTELPiece IN THE DRAWING-ROOM AT "APPLEGARTH."

Residence of Charles W. Wetmore at Oyster Bay, L. I. Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.
Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.



THE DINING-ROOM AT "APPLEGARTH."

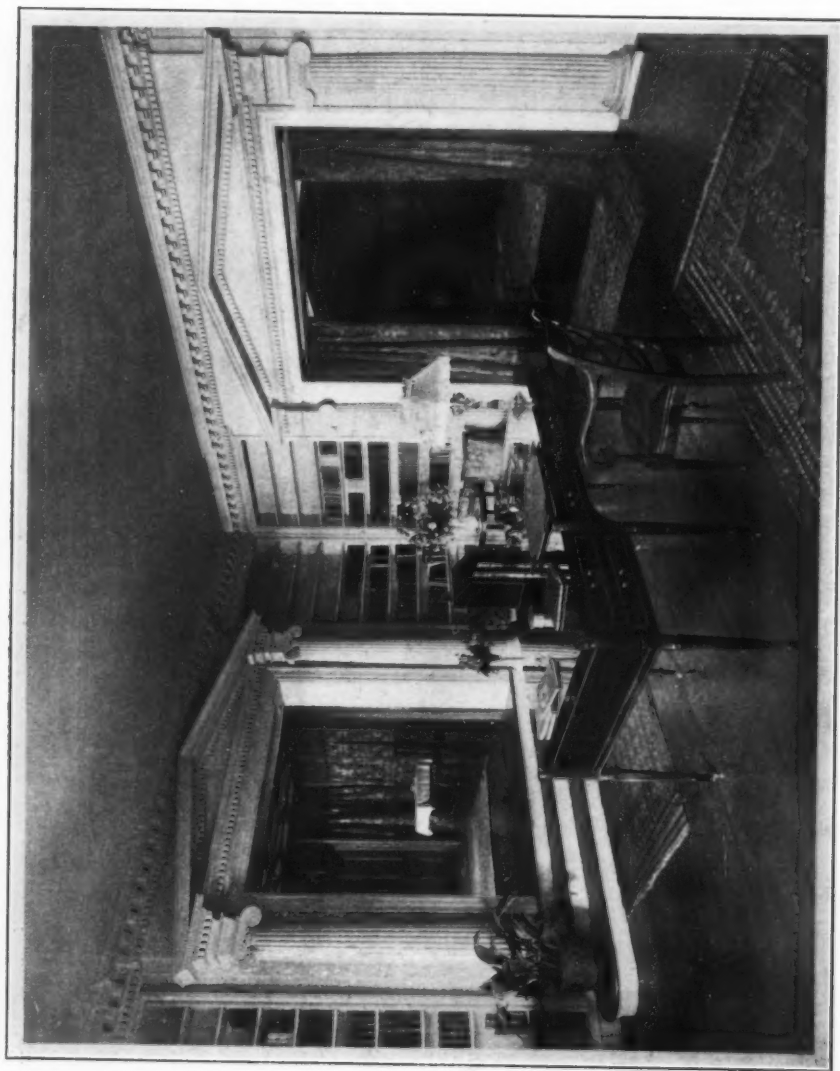
Residence of Charles W. Wetmore at Oyster Bay, L. I.

Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.
Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.



THE DINING-ROOM AT "APPLEGARTH."

Residence of Charles W. Wetmore at Oyster Bay, L. I. Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.
Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.



THE LIBRARY AT "APPLEGARTH."

Residence of Charles W. Wetmore at Oyster Bay, L. I.

Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, Architects.
Photo by Wurts Bros. & Co.

and tracery work, in the Tudor style. In style the library is Georgian and finished in white ivory. The doorways are finished with Ionic columns and pediments, and the wall surfaces are covered with book shelves, which extend up to the wood cornice.

The dining-room is finished with oak wall pilasters having carved caps and oak tracerial panels, forming a frieze with cornice and the panels between the pilasters below the frieze are hung with tapestries. The ceiling has a geometrical design of moulded ribs. The woodwork of this room is stained a dark brown and the flat surfaces of the ceiling are tinted a cream color. At the north end of the dining-room is an alcove which contains the fireplace of limestone having a stone hood extending to ceiling and supported on carved grotesque brackets. The dining-room has a door opening on to the loggia.

The walls and ceiling of the tea-room are done in stucco and the floor is paved with Welsh pavers. This room is so arranged that it may be thrown open in the summer and closed during the winter. At one side of the tea-room is a small fountain done in ornamental stucco work, where water may be obtained for plants.

The first story of the kitchen wing contains the kitchen, pantries, closets and small office, the latter connected with the main hall. The second story of the main house is divided into five bedrooms and three bathrooms. Chamber "A" is paneled to the ceiling, which has wood beams and is stained a dark green. The fireplace is of limestone with an over mantel of traceried wood panels finished to match the other woodwork in room. Chamber "C" is paneled to a height of six feet and stained a dark brown. All the fireplaces in the second story except the one in Chamber "A" are faced with red pressed brick. The remainder of the bedrooms and bathrooms are finished in ivory white.

The dressing-room is divided into plaster panels with moulded wood stiles and rails, wood cornice and base, and is finished in ivory white. The second story of the kitchen wing is divided into servants' rooms and two bathrooms. The attic of this wing also contains two large servant's room. The attic of the main house is not finished and is used for storage purposes. In the cellar of the kitchen wing is the laundry and dairy, and the cellar of the main house contains the furnaces and storage for coal and vegetables. The house is heated by two hot air furnaces, which heat the principal the first and second story rooms and a hot water system which heats two of the principal bathrooms and the tea-room.

J. Lawrence Aspinwall.



HOTEL SOMERSET.

47th Street, south side, east of Long Acre Square, New York City.

OVER THE DRAUGHTING BOARD.

Opinions Official and Unofficial.

It is curious that after so long, the tall New York apartment house should still be "*ferae naturae*." The tall office building is much younger, and yet, not nearly so untamed. On the contrary a general

**Architectural
Aberrations
No. 20.
The Hotel
Somerset.**

mode of treatment of it has been reached, and the variations upon this mode that are permissible are comparatively slight and executable only within fixed and narrow limits. It is true that the "consensus" is a convention, founded not upon fact, but upon fiction. The fiction is that the skyscraper is a building of masonry, with walls which support themselves, and which must accordingly be more massive at the bottom. The fact is that it is a frame building, and that the "siding," the "protective envelope," has no more to do with the structure than the clapboarding or shingling, with which the carpenter dissembles the construction of a wooden frame, while the artistic builders in wood, the Swiss, for example, and the Norwegians, express the construction and the panelation that results from it. The architects who have tried to do as much for the steel frame you can count upon the fingers, and almost upon the thumb of one hand. And, up to date, they have not received even the flattery of imitation, let alone the benefit of improvement upon their necessarily crude efforts.

Still, there is no denying that the convention has its uses, and that there is some reason why it should have imposed itself upon designers, who were always hurried for time, and who would have despaired, with ever so much time, of arriving at a real solution of the novel problem so suddenly sprung on them. The conventional composition, the massive base, the equable and monotonous shaft, the decorated top, and general adoption of it, have saved us, no doubt, a great deal of wild work that would have been inflicted upon us, if every designer had gone on doing what seemed pretty in his own eyes, with no more regard to historical proprieties than to the facts of the case. The tall office building is already a tolerably distinct architectural type, to which even designers who ought to know better find safety in conforming. When one of them breaks loose and refuses to conform, he commonly ends by justifying the conformists.

In the apartment houses of more moderate height there is also coming to be an accepted convention resulting in something like a type. Those familiar structures, the six-story and the seven-story apartment house have arrived, in their latest manifestations, at a

form and treatment nearly as Procrustean as "the regular thing" in Parisian apartment houses, of which the height is fixed by municipal regulation, which are invariably built to "the limit," and of which the architecture seems to be quite as rigidly fixed and imposed as the dimensions, the material uniform and the effect so nearly identical that there may not be a front in a mile that shows anything individually noticeable. Something like that we seem to be coming to in the six and seven-story erections, especially on the west side of the Park, with their double swells, their combination of light stone and red brick, and alas, their umbrageous tin cornices. But for these crowning members, which the facility and cheapness of the material invariably lead the designers to bloat, this would not be a bad type, though the very variety of the material tends to make long street stretches of them more monotonous and tiresome than they would otherwise be. And in fact the result may be called a type with almost as much accuracy as the Parisian prototype. It is not with these houses of moderate height that the main architectural trouble arises. It is when we get into the upper air with the true skyscrapers. It is not encouraging to reflect how much better the first lofty apartment houses were than their successors. Not to speak of the Dakota, which remains the most architecturally interesting apartment house in New York, how much the Navarro houses in Fifty-ninth Street gain by comparison with most of their successors, and how lucky it is that this part of the south front of Central Park should have been "pre-empted" against later and loftier building. What horrors would be apt to take their places! To be sure, the Navarro houses had the architectural advantage and the economical disadvantages of ante-dating the steel frame. All the better for the people who have to look out at them from the sylvan spaces of the Park.

It is the steel framed apartment house of ten stories or more in which the steel framed construction is apt to be seen at its worst. The gaunt sides and backs of the buildings, with the construction covered and concealed by thin simulacra of walls pierced with openings cut where they are wanted, with no pretense of grouping or arrangement with reference to architectural expression or architectural effect, would put the fronts to an open shame so long as the two are seen together, and together they are sure to be visible, so long as the residential streets are not completely lined with skyscrapers. This condition is, of course, unthinkable, since in that case the skyscrapers would not be habitable. One of the first precautions the judicious undertaker of a skyscraper should take is to acquire control of the adjoining land to protect his side lights by keeping the bordering buildings low. To make a continuous row of skyscrapers as habitable as a continuous row of five-story apart-

ment houses, one would need not only to widen the streets in proportion to the increased height, but also correspondingly to increase the area of the courts so as to admit sunlight to the bottom of a well twelve stories deep. All this done, there would be little profit or economy in the skyscrapers.

Meanwhile, and in view of the conditions, it seems that the judicious designer should attempt to make the less ostensible aspects of his building, the backs and the sides, somewhat more presentable, and at the same time to treat his fronts so simply that they shall not be glaringly incongruous with the unarchitecturesque appendages. Of late, some designers, to their credit, have taken more or less successful pains to the end, as the Scripture has it, that their uncomely parts may have more abundant comeliness, but we cannot name one apartment house, built since the steel frame came in, in which the relation between the street front and the side walls is what architectural comity requires. It is commonly plain that the designer has seen nothing and considered nothing but his street front in elevation, and has considered that as if it were to be seen entirely by itself. So would the fabled ostrich behave, if the ostrich were an architect, excepting that the ostrich tries to conceal as much as possible of his front elevation, forgetting that his rear elevation is still visible and conspicuous, while the architect makes his front elevation as conspicuous as may be, trusting that nobody will observe the rest of his awkward anatomy.

In this respect, of an exclusive attention to the street front, the architect of the Hotel Somerset, in West Forty-fourth Street, is merely representative and characteristic. It is the treatment of his street front that is egregious and peculiar to itself. It is in fact "the limit," and long may it remain so. Sure enough, the front has, according to the convention in such case made and provided, a beginning, a middle and an end, having more or less the relation of base, shaft and capital. So far, as things go, so good. Also, there is no question where each of the main divisions begins and where it ends. The division is emphasized by differences of material. The first two stories, constituting the base, are in light stone treated with the usual fictitious pretense of massiveness. The following seven, constituting the shaft, are in a combination of rough red brick and light terra cotta (the texture and the color of the brickwork, by the way, constitute the one feature of the whole front on which one is inclined to congratulate the designer, and to commend him for imitation.) The crowning three stories are in a medley of brick, terra cotta, slate and sheet metal—conspicuously and especially sheet metal.

As the color and the texture of the shaft are the only things on which one can congratulate the designer, so the treatment of it is

that part of his work which most escapes reproach as being "the regular thing." In so far as it is not the regular thing it differs for the worse for being the irregular thing. To be sure, a transitional story at the base of a seven-story shaft is a legitimate enough means of variety, and the projecting entablature of the third story, with the pedimented window at the centre, is a sufficiently signaling treatment, as is also the framing of the openings in the ninth, with the decorated panels, or would be but for the interruption of those awful corbels in sheet metal, though it would have been a distinct gain to the front if the upper of these transitional stories had more distinctly recalled the lower. But why the interruption of the shaft at the seventh story by the row of windows crowned with pediments and flanked by columns? What is there about that story that should lead one to emphasize it? It is of exactly the same functional and structural significance as the story above or the story below. The tenants will not pay a dollar a year more for the privilege of living behind these decorations, will not even be aware of the decorations. Everybody knows that all the floors are internally alike, occupied for the same purpose and by the same sort of people. To signalize one row of apartments in such a structure is as arbitrary and absurd as it would be for bees to decorate one row of cells in a honeycomb. The bees are not so foolish. Nature does not do business upon such principles. This feature is imitated apparently from the like feature in the Hotel Renaissance, in Forty-third Street, where it is much more in place, the building being at once so much lower and so much broader that each story can count more as a unit in the composition—not that it does any good even there. Here it is a manifest and avowed excrescence, which the observer must wish away.

And yet, the front would not be worth talking about, certainly would not be worth classifiable as an aberration, if it were all treated as little offensively as the shaft. The base is very trying, though not more so, perhaps, than twenty others, and this for the reason that, like them, it is sacrificed to the portico. Why any portico is a question that one would think would occur to any designer of apartment houses. The only answer is that it gives stateliness to the entrance. This entails a serious practical sacrifice in a building which is distinctly nothing if not practical and utilitarian. One cannot help seeing that the three central openings of the second story are so darkened by the projection of the entablature, blocking at once the light from without and the view from within as to render the apartment on which they open distinctly the least eligible in the building. Why should this sacrifice be made for a feature which is neither useful nor ornamental. The only possible use of a portico in such a position is that of a shelter, a porch, and

this portico is obviously unavailable for that purpose. It is a protection neither against wind nor against rain. Who so stands under it is rather more exposed to the weather than he would be if it were away. And it is an ornament which is no more ornamental than it is useful. The production of the order through the two stories gives it an intolerable darkness, and makes it an awkward as well as a perfectly extraneous appendage to the front. Who, excepting the architect, and the other architects of like absurdities, does not see that it would be better away, with only a dignified archway in the first story to form and mark the actual entrance, and the balcony above carried suitably on a row of corbels, instead of absurdly on the attenuated order?

But it is not the order at the bottom, but the order at the top, that is most absurd and that most clearly converts the front into an architectural aberration. Though it is a bold saying, it seems to be a safe one that this is the most ridiculous of recent erections in New York. We all know that sheet metal is cheap and fatally facile, but we know no other instance in which its cheapness and its fatal facility have been quite so "notoriously abused." The curvilinear Dutch gable in three stories, relieved even against the almost vertical mansard in slate, and executed in honest brick and stonework, would not have been bad at all. It would have been congruous with the front below, would have given it a desirable aspect of quaintness and domesticity, and would really have crowned the edifice. All this is completely effaced by this pompous sham, a sheet metal order pretending to be supported on sheet metal corbels, and to support a broken pediment of the same noble material, the whole an evidently extraneous and purely monumental erection in tinware. What on earth did the man do it for, when it would have been so easy not to do it?—so easy and so cheap, for, cheap as tinware may be, it is yet dearer than nothing at all. And the ridiculous thing is also inconspicuous and nearly invisible. Even from the opposite sidewalk it cannot be really taken in, and it is only by the temporary accident of a vacant lot opposite, and from the rear thereof, that it can be so viewed as to be fairly photographed. Is it conceivable that one dollar more of revenue will ever accrue to the owner of the Somerset by reason of this irrelevant and ridiculous monstrosity at the top of its front? The desire for "something fancy" which has nothing to do with the case, has very seldom produced results so preposterous.



THE BLAIR BUILDING.

Northwest corner of Broad Street and Exchange Place, New York City.
Carrère & Hastings, Architects.